

August 28th, 2016
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle C

1st Reading: Sirach (Wisdom) 3:17 – 18, 20, 28 – 29.

God favors the humble, so be humble.

Psalm 68:4 – 11.

God, in your goodness, you have made a home for the poor.

2nd Reading: Hebrews 12:18 – 19, 22 – 24a.

God is approachable in God's holy city, so be not afraid to go there.

Gospel: Luke 14: 1, 7 – 14.

God exalts the humble and humbles the exalted.

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

Today's readings certainly speak to us about humility and the blessings it can bring into our lives. The word "humility" is derived from the word "humis" meaning 'of the ground, earth.' In order to practice true humility we have to understand and be conscious of who we really are, at our roots. It is because of God's extravagant graces and mercy that we are in process of becoming God's beloved children. We are in this together, following the instructions of Jesus the true mediator of this new covenant.

Luke, in the Gospel passage we focus on this morning, paints an intriguing picture of another meal that Jesus is invited to in the home of a Pharisee. This is the 3rd one in this Gospel; but we all know that Jesus used meal-fellowship a lot to do his teaching. In this passage he continues his trend of turning our human nature and our way of behaving with each other on its head in two specific ways.

First he kind of shines a mirror on the guests' behavior of seeking to sit at the higher places, leaving of course the places at the table with the lower prestige for the people yet to arrive. Jesus suggests to his audience that they might want to choose the lower places at the table with the idea of the host inviting them to a higher position. One problem I see with this, and maybe it's only me, is I could see the host whispering in my ear, "glad to see you know your place." The other thing that will happen is that we will become friends with those around us in this less distinguished area and not want to move when asked. There is this drive in us to place ourselves above the other; and we really need to remember that if we walk around with our noses up in the air, we will only catch flies or fall on our faces.

Next Jesus turns his attention to the host. Whom do you invite to your parties, your dinners, lunches, etc? Let's face it the who is really more important than the what in this case. Mostly we tend to not go outside of our comfort zones, so we stick with our friends, relatives, and those who think like us. Do you see the sickness in this? Yet we do it all the time. What does Jesus suggest for a guest list? The folks from the other side of the tracks, those people who are the farthest from our mind in terms of issuing an invitation, are the ones to be invited.

Pope Francis has said: "I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us. Not only do they share in the *sensus fidei*, but in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelized by them. The new evangelization is an invitation to acknowledge the saving power at work in their lives and to put them at the center of the Church's pilgrim way. We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them."*

So clearly he and Jesus are on the same page here and we need to ask ourselves as we try to be "lighthouses" and "field hospitals" on this faith journey, this pilgrim way, "how or what are we doing to block folks from joining us in this banquet we are here to celebrate?" Clearly they also realize that it takes all of us to make up the Body of Christ, to be Church in this world; so we need to get busy, get out there, and get to know one another and become the beacon of light that our world, our city, our church so drastically needs.

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

*[Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium](#)
[of the Holy Father Francis](#)