

*Humility: mother of all virtues!*

Robert Carris, a great interpreter of Luke points out: In the gospel of Luke, “Jesus will be either at banquet or on the way to banquet”. This is unique to Lk. Jesus, eating with sinners and tax collectors, absolving the sinner woman at Simon’s house @ Dinner; (teaching about the inner cleanliness at the banquet in the house of the Pharisee); healing the paralytic while at banquet. Jesus at the banquet shows, how even a pure worldly banquet cel. can become a teaching class on spirituality. For J., banquets were not merely time of enjoying food& drink, but a place to learn the depth of spiritual truths. By sharing banquet table with the sinner and the outcast, he teaches the rich the lesson of sharing, and makes guest, his disciples.

Today’s gospel tells us about the rush and push of the invited guests to occupy the first places at wedding banquet table. Jesus make it an occasion to teach the great lesson of humility, mother of all virtues; telling them to choose the lower places so that they may be honored, instead of being humiliated.

B&S, There is a lot of conflict in this world. I don't just mean war, terrorism or violence. I mean the daily conflicts we are part of, at work, school, in our families and even in this Church. Small arguments, little disagreements, frustrations that other people don't quite see the world as we see it. Tiny fights we need to win each day to succeed in our work, and living our faith.

There is something about ‘being human’ that drives us to succeed, to want to achieve things. For some people they target greatness, for others, maybe the ambition is smaller, getting the kids to eat

breakfast and get to school on time is challenge enough. Ambition, drive, success and winning are the themes of today. Today's teaching from Christ seems just contradictory, "If anyone wants to be first, they must make themselves last of all." The message doesn't fit with the way, we see the world function.

Our society tells us that being right, being first, being the best is all important. But we know, this is not in the true spirit of the gospel. There is only one thing bad about being right, or first or best, and that one thing is, doing something just to be right or just to be the best or just to be the first. *So what are we supposed to do?*

We are called to be gentle and are called to endure. We are called to bring peace to conflict. As apostle tells us, the seeds of the peace-making, will bear fruit in holiness. Jesus tells us to occupy the lowest place, to be the servant of all. It's in our nature to put ourselves first. Christ tells us not to, he tells us to put others first. Put others first, to serve them means, you are serving the Lord himself.

There is a huge difference between 'doing your best' and 'being best'. Being the best student, the best parent, the best doctor, the best anything you can be, *is good*, it's holy and it will bear fruit. Being better than anyone else is pointless and will only lead to conflict. We need to use our skills for others, welcome their needs, their vulnerabilities. Help them as we would help a child. Welcome them with open arms, and we will be welcoming Christ.

B&S, Following our Lord is not easy. He never promised, it would be. Selflessness is not in our nature, pride and greed are. If you are to be a follower of Christ, you need to put your human nature last,

to enable you to put your spiritual nature first. Work hard, but always for others, strive to do your best, but resist the urge, just to be the first and the best, for if you are the best, thank God that you are able to serve so well.

This week I invite you to reflect on the today's teaching. It's a hard one, a call to be humble. It's one we will all find difficult, and without prayer and a relationship with a loving God we may find it impossible. But we have a loving God, one who is humble and selfless, who died for us, who forgives us, and is ready to help us if we just ask in prayer for help. Kindly pray about conflicts in your life, pray for help in bringing peace, pray that you maybe be a seed of the peacemakers and bring all, a harvest of holiness.

*Today's joke: A little girl became very restless during Sunday Mass, as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"*