

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

My son, perform your tasks in meekness;
then you will be loved by those whom God accepts.
The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself;
so you will find favour in the sight of the Lord.
For great is the might of the Lord;
he is glorified by the humble.
The affliction of the proud has no healing,
for a plant of wickedness has taken root in him.
The mind of the intelligent man will ponder a parable,
and an attentive ear is the wise man's desire.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS:

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 68(67):4-5ac. 6-7b. 10-11. R cf. 11b

In your goodness, O God, you provided a home for the poor.

The upright shall rejoice at the presence of God;
they shall exult with glad rejoicing.
O sing to God; make music to his name.
The LORD is his name.

In your goodness, O God, you provided a home for the poor.

Father of orphans, defender of widows:
such is God in his holy place.
God gives the desolate a home to dwell in;
he leads the prisoners forth into prosperity.

In your goodness, O God, you provided a home for the poor.

You poured down, O God, a generous rain;
when your heritage languished, you restored it.
It was there that your flock began to dwell.
In your goodness, O God, you provided for the poor.

In your goodness, O God, you provided a home for the poor.

A READING FROM THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

Brothers and Sisters:

You have not come to what may be touched,
a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest
and the sound of a trumpet
and a voice whose words made the hearers beg
that no further messages be spoken to them.

But you have come to Mount Sion
and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,
and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,
and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in
heaven,
and to God, the judge of all,
and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,
and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.
THE WORD OF THE LORD.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Take my yoke upon you, says the Lord,
and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO LUKE

One Sabbath, when Jesus went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully.

Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you,

“Give your place to this person”, and then you, with shame, will take the lowest place.

But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher.”

Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’

He said also to the man who had invited him,

‘When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends, or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you.

For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.’

The Gospel of the Lord

THE REFLECTION

I remember Fr Walter speaking to the 'Red House' the middle years 9-11 as we were the boarders, at evening prayer, he was concerned about the lack of respect for the evening meal staff. 'Those who had servants were behaved better than those who do not. Almost none of us did (it was not a very posh school) but he was clever, developing the point these people do their job so you can do yours and they deserve to be treated as you would one another. He wanted us to think about always treating others with respect no matter who or what they were doing.

Jesus noticed the sin of pride, a sin born of fear of being treated with the respect you think you need. This can fail because others have no fear of our importance and will tell us to move. There is no point in trying to feel superior, your value will be earned and can be good enough to generate the respect of others if you treat them well and are interested in them.

He further shows what he means by saying invite the poor. Other people have gifts we can discover. By being open to others, as Jesus so often was. we can try to see as God sees, great souls in the making. The word humble in our language is a long way from its traditional meaning. The virtue of true humility is in our Catholic tradition from the middle is derived from humus, the earth, meaning grounded, being real; I enjoyed a phrase 'get your head in the game', focussing on what is real now. Truly knowing ourselves for us means accepting the reality of God watchful presence in how we treat others.

We can find true happiness in this world by giving of ourselves, by this only fully realising who we are as the path to true fulfilment. This can be painful and a slow process of learning as others may be on a different path of competitiveness and wanting to win respect by verbal or material victory.

The Christian way of Love is an unselfish one witnessed by God and directed to others, based on the respect for every person, knowing ourselves and what we have to give to gain respect. To take an interest in and value other people in themselves.

