**22nd Sunday Ordinary Time, Cycle. C. 2025.**

**Todays’ readings** invite us into the heart of Christian discipleship-: **humility & Generosity. The Book of Sirach says,** “***To humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God***”. This message is echoed in the parable about a **wedding banquet** that Jesus tells in **Todays’ Gospel Reading**. We live in a world that often encourages self-promotion, competition and climbing social ladders. Yet Jesus turns that completely upside down. He **tells us that greatness in the Kingdom of God is not about status or recognition, but about humbling ourselves and lifting up othe**rs.

When **Jesus sees the guests scrambling for the best seats**, He uses the moment to point to a deeper spiritual truth: **true honor comes God, not from human praise.** The humble person is not someone with low-esteem, but someone **who sees clearly: who they are, who God is and who others are. They live not to be seen, but to serve.**

We are all familiar with that moment when we walk into a wedding reception wondering where we will be seated. Unless we are part of the actual wedding party, **most of us would never dream of sitting at the main table,** instead we tend to stay close to the door, looking for the table map or **hoping that someone will call out “**over here, **you are at this ta**ble”. Then we will be esteemed.

**Jesus doesn’t stop there, but goes further**. He addresses the host and challenges a much deeper issue: the tendency to give with the hope of receiving- is called the “transactional relationships”. He says, “***When you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind***”. Why? Because these are the people who cannot repay you, and that’s exactly the point. **Love, real love, gives freely without expecting anything in return**. This kind of radical hospitality is the heart of the Gospel. Its’ not just about who we invite to dinner- its’ about who we make room for our lives, in our parishes and in our hearts.

In **today’s Gospel Jesus precisely teac**hes the same thing- about humility and its role in the Kingdom. He makes it clear that the kingdom of **God is a pure gift, never earned or achieved by what we do. T**here is no special status or honor for those who come first or those born into any particular race or family. Simply to be at the banquet is honor enough. And where we sit at this great feast is not for us to decide, but for the one who has invited us. **Jesus isn’t giving etiquette lessons: He is teaching us how to live as citizens of His kingdom- a Kingdom where the last are first, the lowly are lifted up, and the humble are exalted.**

The great significance of the virtue of humility is the lack of concern for ones’ own prestige and consequently esteeming others above self. It means the willingness to associate with those who can do nothing for us. **It is humility born of tru**th that enables a person to realize that at the heavenly banquet in God’s kingdom, no one can choose his place or exalt himself on his own. A humble man knows that at the **end of life’s’ jo**urney when we stand before the Lord, nothing matters except a **humble and contrite hea**rt.

Humbling oneself, then is not the negation or suppression of the human. It is not the destruction of talents, but accepting the fact that **everything is from Him and for Him**. It is choosing to put oneself in the hands of the creator so as to be created; it is the opposite of pride, self-worship and the attempt to set ourselves at the center of the world.

The great emphasis on humility in both Judaism and Christianity must be traced back to its roots in the beginning of Israel. **The p**eople **of Israel knew they owed their origin to no one but Yahweh,** who chose them out of love and not for their human excellence and achievements. This enables them to realize their smallness before Yahweh. The New Testament following the tradition of Israel, gives greater significance and meaning to humility. Jesus Himself says: “***Learn of Me for I am meek and humble of heart***”. *We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility*. Do I seek recognition for the good I do? Or am I content with God seeing it? How can I practice humility not just in words but in choices and actions?