

August 28, 2022 – True Humility (22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Gospel of Luke 14:1, 7-14

Fr. John

All three scripture readings in today's liturgy deal with the contrasting qualities of humility and arrogance.

From the Old Testament Book of Sirach we get a more didactic teaching as a parent would instruct a child about the manner in which we should go about our business and interrelate with others.

From the letter to the Hebrews, we are reminded that God is to be regarded with awe and reverence - symbolized by the volcano-like Mt. Sinai wherein God revealed Himself to Moses and the Israelites. Almost in contrast to this, Mt. Zion, on which Jerusalem is situated, is seen as a precursor of the heavenly Jerusalem - a place of peace where, one day all the saints and angels will gather.

And in the gospel reading, Jesus uses a wedding banquet to illustrate the difference between humility and an attitude of entitlement.

Increasingly, we live in a society wherein we are called to relate to people who come from a culture that is far different from our own. The demographics of Canada and indeed all of North America are changing.

For example, for many generations those who came from a technologically advanced country often thought of themselves as being superior to those who were perceived to be less so. Recently, during the papal visit to Canada, we heard much about the 'Doctrine of Discovery' that was sanctioned by the Church during the early days of European exploration and annexation of lands considered to be either empty or populated by people thought to be 'uncivilized'.

Perhaps only now are we waking up to the fact that technology is only part of the measure of human maturity and perhaps there are lessons to be learned from the perceived inferior culture. [eg. a 12 year-old may instruct grandma on using a computer, but the grandma has much wisdom to impart about life to the 12 year-old]. I myself learned from my relationships with Indigenous people the important custom of meeting in a circle where there is no front seat or back seat - everyone is equally important.

On a more individual and personal level, we must acknowledge that each person has lived and experienced a life different from our own whether culturally or family wise. Perhaps they have heroically dealt with trials never faced by ourselves or extended love in a way still new to our own self-absorbed minds.

We, therefore, need to make room for the person who can teach us new insights into the goodness of human nature and into the generous love of God the Creator and Redeemer.

Perhaps the poor and marginalized have more to give us than we to them. And they, as the gospel says, will repay us with new life, and heal **our** crippled condition, **our** blindness, **our** inability to walk. They have ways of life which we receive when we receive them with love and reverence - that is with **true biblical humility**.

Perhaps a good litmus test to measure our degree of humility is that of evaluating where the level of gratitude is in our everyday life. Each and everyday, do we fall on the side of gratitude or entitlement?