

The 22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year C – 8/31/2025 – Msgr. Peter Quang Nguyen

- **First Reading – Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29:** Be humble in all you do, and you will be loved. Seek wisdom, avoid what is beyond you, and give alms to atone for sins.
- **Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 68:** God provides for the poor and needy, giving them a home and bringing joy to the righteous. He protects orphans, widows, and revives the land for his people.
- **Second Reading – Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24A:** You have come to the heavenly Jerusalem, where angels and the righteous gather, and Jesus mediates a new covenant with his powerful, redemptive blood.
- **Gospel – Luke 14:1, 7-14:** Jesus taught about humility, advising guests to take the lowest place and hosts to invite those who cannot repay. He promised that those who humble themselves will be exalted and will be rewarded at the resurrection.

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The common theme of today's readings is the need for true humility which leads to a generous, blessed sharing with the needy. The readings warn us against all forms of pride and self-glorification. They present humility not only as a virtue but also as a means of opening our hearts, our minds, and our hands to the poor, the needy, the disadvantaged, and the marginalized of society. For Jesus, the daily human needs of the poor are the *personal* responsibility of every authentic, humble believer. In addition, humility is the mother not only of peace, but also of many virtues, like obedience, fear, reverence, patience, modesty, meekness, and gentleness. Let us take a look at Mother Têrêsa's humility.

1. Speak as little as possible about yourself.
2. Keep busy with your own affairs and not those of others.
3. Avoid curiosity.
4. Do not interfere in the affairs of others.
5. Accept small irritations with good humor.
6. Do not dwell on the faults of others.
7. Accept censures even if unmerited.
8. Give in to the will of others.
9. Accept insults and injuries.
10. Accept contempt, being forgotten and disregarded.
11. Be courteous and delicate even when provoked by someone.
12. Do not seek to be admired and loved.
13. Do not protect yourself behind your own dignity.
14. Give in, in discussions, even when you are right.
15. Choose always the more difficult task. Learn to be humble by doing all the humble work and doing it for Jesus.

We cannot learn humility from books; we learn it by accepting humiliations. Humiliations are not meant to torture us; they are gifts from God. These little humiliations—if we accept them with joy—will help us to be holy, to have a meek and humble heart like Jesus. (*St. Teresa of Calcutta*).

Funeral of Charlemagne: Charlemagne was the greatest Christian ruler of the early Middle Ages. After his death a mighty funeral procession left his castle for the cathedral at Aix. When the royal casket arrived, with a lot of pomp and circumstance, it was met by the local bishop, who barred the cathedral door.

“Who comes?” the Bishop asked from inside the cathedral, as was the custom.

“Charlemagne, Lord and King of the Holy Roman Empire,” proclaimed the Emperor’s proud herald.

“Him I know not,” the Bishop replied. *“Who comes?”*

The herald, a bit shaken, replied, *“Charles the Great, a good and honest man of the earth.”*

“Him I know not,” the Bishop said again. *“Who comes?”*

The herald, now completely crushed, responded, *“Charles, a lowly sinner, who begs the gift of Christ.”*

To this, the Bishop, Christ’s representative, responded, *“Enter! Receive Christ’s gift of life!”*

Even Charlemagne in all his glory and good works could not assume a position of honor.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus invites his host to receive applause and honor from God by inviting the poor and the needy to the banquet.

The true charity. The temptations that constantly come to everyone are the “pot” and the “chair”, that is, the love of money and power. Today’s Gospel clearly points out these two things, and to counter them, instead of fighting for the “chair”, Jesus teaches us to be humble, instead of wanting to get something in return, He teaches us to give freely.

1. Humility. “When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited with you, and the one who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place’. Then you will be ashamed and go and sit in the lowest place.” This saying penetrated deeply into the hearts of those at the banquet that day, because Jesus condemned those who were proud and sought the best places, and exposed their hypocrisy.

Then Jesus taught: *“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 have honor in the presence of those who are at your table, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

“Exalting” means wanting to assert oneself; considering oneself the best. This is the behavior of arrogant people, the attitude of wanting fame and power, wanting to be above everyone.

“Humbling” is the attitude of humble people. **Humility** is recognizing that we are lacking, imperfect, in order to rise up, and weak, in order to repent.

2. True charity. Jesus taught: *“When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, or your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind; and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For he will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”*

Usually, we all want to give back to each other whatever we do for each other, even greedily like "letting go of a shrimp to catch a prawn, letting go of a hawk to catch a perch". In our nature, we show that there is an unequal discrimination between the rich and the poor. When we prepare a party, we still give priority to inviting the rich, and if we are having a meal and meet a rich person, we still find it easier to invite them than to see a beggar passing by...

We always want to get back what we give, even wanting to get back many times more, but few of us have the generosity to share with the poor. We still use the standard of "economic fairness" to treat each other, then we Christians are no better than that, because pagans can do better than us, because doing good deeds is rewarded, meaning that they have already been rewarded, so there is no more merit before God.

Lord Jesus, help us to live humbly in our state of life so that You may grow in our hearts. Amen.