

## 22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

“Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled,  
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Luke 14:1, 7–14

In today’s Gospel, Jesus accepts an invitation to dine at the house of a leading Pharisee. We might imagine the atmosphere: everyone carefully watching Him, hoping He might slip, while He, with perfect calm, is watching their hearts. At first glance, Jesus’ teaching about choosing the lowest seat at a banquet seems to be a lesson in social etiquette. But as always with the Lord, it is not mere politeness—He is opening a window into the Kingdom of God.

We all know how natural it is to want to be noticed, to be given a place of honor. From childhood, we feel this longing: on the playground, in the classroom, at work, even in parish life. We want recognition, respect, influence. But Jesus is telling us that this instinct, if left unchecked, can quietly enslave us. When our worth is tied to how high we sit at the table, we become captives of pride, comparison, and fear of being overlooked.

Instead, Christ calls us to embrace humility—the freedom of choosing the lowest place. Humility is not about pretending to be less than we are, nor about denying our God-given dignity. Rather, humility is about placing ourselves in the truth: all we are is a gift from God, and every honor worth having comes from Him, not from the applause of others. When we take the lower seat, we are making a silent act of trust: ***“Lord, my value is not determined by where I sit, but by the fact that You have invited me to the banquet.”***

Notice also how Jesus flips the world’s logic upside down. For Him, true honor is not found in being served but in serving. He tells us not to invite the rich and powerful who can repay us, but the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind—those who cannot return the favor. Why? Because this mirrors the very heart of God. Is this not what He has done for us? None of us could repay the gift of salvation. We are the poor and the needy, and yet God has invited us to His heavenly banquet. When we show hospitality to those who cannot repay us, we are walking in the very footsteps of divine mercy.

On a practical level, this Gospel asks us to look honestly at our daily choices. Do we seek recognition when we volunteer, or do we serve quietly, for love of Christ? Do we make room at our tables—literal and figurative—for those who are overlooked? Humility is not an abstract virtue; it shows up in whether we listen more than we speak, whether we notice the lonely parishioner, whether we step aside so that others can shine.

In the Eucharist, this teaching comes alive. We are here, at this Mass, not because of status or achievement, but because we hunger for the grace only Christ can give. The Lord Himself takes the lowest seat, humbling Himself under the appearance of bread and wine, making Himself food for us. And He says, ***“When you live this way—serving, loving, giving without repayment—you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”***

Let us then ask for the grace to live the humility of Christ. May we choose the lower place, not to be noticed by others, but to be lifted by God. And may our tables, our homes, and our hearts be wide open to those who cannot repay us, so that we may one day take our place at the eternal banquet of Heaven.