



Liturgy Cycle C

Twenty-Second Sunday Of The Year

Giving Without Hope Of Return

Introduction

In today's Gospel Jesus says to us: 'If you are invited to a party take the lowest place.' How often we put ourselves first, grabbing the limelight. Again he says to us: 'Give to those from whom you have nothing to receive.' How often we give in order to win the praise of others, and only to those who will return the compliment. We know that these attitudes are unworthy of a follower of Christ. Let us ask pardon for them and for all our other failings.

First Reading (Sirach 3:17-20, 28-29)

This praises the person who is humble. A humble person is open to God and never rejects wisdom, no matter where it comes from.

Second Reading (Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24)

This contrasts Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. Sinai is the place where the old covenant was made. Zion stands for the heavenly Jerusalem - the goal of the Christian's pilgrimage.

Gospel (Luke 14:1, 7-14)

Jesus urges his followers not to covet places of honour, and always to act out of unselfish motives.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray to our heavenly Father for the attitudes of mind and heart that Jesus wanted to see in his followers.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For Christians: that they may seek to correct their own faults before considering those of others. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all those in high places: that they may not seek their own glory but devote themselves generously to serving those under them. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.



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For those in our society who are always left out or who have to be content with the lowest place... the poor, the lonely, the unfortunate. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For true generosity of heart, so that we may be able to give as Christ gave, without expecting anything in return. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

Communion Reflection

In telling of his experiences as a prisoner in Auschwitz, Viktor Frankl gives a magnificent example of the kind of giving Christ praised, namely, giving without any hope of return.

On returning from work in the evening, with soup bowl in hand, you lined up for your meagre ration of food.

Frankl was always happy when he was assigned to the line in which prisoner-cook F was giving out the soup.

Why?

Because he was the only cook who did not look at the faces of the men whose bowls he was filling. He was the only one who dealt out the soup equally, regardless of who the recipient was.

In other words, he did not make favourites out of his personal friends or fellow countrymen, picking out the potatoes for them, while others got watery soup skimmed from the top.

How difficult it is to find someone to do this even in so-called normal circumstances, Yet here was a man who did it in the hell that was Auschwitz where everyday one was faced with decisions of life and death. How did he manage to do it? From where did he get his inspiration?