



Liturgy Cycle C

# **Thirty-First Sunday Of The Year**

## **Zacchaeus: The Man Out On A Limb**

### **Introduction**

Today's Gospel is a shocking one; at least it shocked the people of Christ's time. What caused the shock was the fact that he went to stay with the most hated man in the community. He did this because he was thinking, not of himself, but of the other person's need. How often we do what will make us popular, rather than what is right. We go where we will be most welcome, rather than where we are most needed. We befriend those who are kind of us, and ignore those we don't like. In many ways we turn the Gospel upside down.

### **First Reading (Wisdom 11:22-12:2)**

It was out of love that God created the world in the first place. Therefore he does not desire the destruction or death of the human family, but is always ready to pardon the sins of those who repent and return to him.

### **Second Reading (2 Thess 1:11-2:2)**

Paul urges the Thessalonians to be worthy of their call and assures them that God will help them to be true to it. At the same time he tells them that the Second Coming of Christ has not yet taken place.

### **Gospel (Luke 19:1-10)**

This relates the conversion of a rich tax collector by the name of Zacchaeus.

### **Prayer Of The Faithful**

Let us pray for some of that spirit of open and generous love Christ showed to Zacchaeus.

R: Lord, hear us in your love.

For the Church: that like Christ it may see its primary mission as that of 'seeking out and saving those who are lost.' Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear us in your love.

For the rich, the powerful, and all those who exploit the poor and the weak of the earth: that they may be converted to the Gospel. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear us in your love.

For all the outcasts of society: that like Christ we may have the courage and the generosity to befriend them. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear us in your love.



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That we may learn from the example of Zacchaeus, who after one encounter with Christ changed his life completely. Let us pray to the Lord.

**R:** Lord, hear us in your love.

### **Communion Reflection**

It was coming towards the end of October,  
and in spite of days of gusting wind,  
the trees refused to give up their leaves.  
But then one morning the ground was covered with frost,  
It was a perfectly calm morning.  
There wasn't even a breath of wind.

As the sun rose an amazing thing happened -  
the leaves began to fall in droves.  
It was as if the trees were surrendering them voluntarily  
under the gentle influence of the sun.  
Long before noon the trees were bare.

We are all selfish by nature.  
We cling to our comforts.  
We do not give up things easily.  
Love alone has the power to disarm us,  
causing us to drop our defences,  
whereas force only causes us to close up.

Through his gentle and loving approach  
Christ disarmed Zacchaeus.  
getting him to open up  
and share his ill-gotten goods with the poor.

People are essentially good,  
but this good has to be awakened and called forth.