

22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR C

(Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29; Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a; Luke 14:1, 7-14)

Excerpts of Pope Francis – *Angelus* - 21 AUG 2022

by Father Charles Fillion

24 August 2025

Brothers and sisters, in the Gospel this Sunday, someone asks Jesus, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” I imagine that he was not the only one asking the question, and I imagine that many people today still ask the same question. You have heard the Lord’s answer: “Strive to enter through the narrow door” (Lk 13:24). The Lord would give today the same answer. The narrow door is an image that could scare us, as if salvation is destined for only a select few, or for perfect people.

But this contradicts what Jesus has taught us on many occasions; and, as a matter of fact, a little further ahead, he confirms, “People will come from east and west, and from north and south, and eat in the kingdom of God” (v. 29). Therefore, this door is narrow but is open to everyone! Do not forget this: to everyone! The door is open to everyone! But to better understand what this narrow door is, we need to ask what it is.

Jesus uses an image from contemporary life, most likely referring to the fact that, when evening would fall, the doors of the city would be closed and only one, the smallest and the narrowest, would remain open. To return home, that was the only way a person could go. Now let’s think about when Jesus says, “I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved” (Jn 10:9). He wants to tell us that to enter into God’s life, into salvation, we need to pass through him, not through anyone else, through him; to welcome him and his Word. Just as to enter into the city, one had to “measure” oneself against the only narrow door that was still open, so too the Christian life is “measured against Christ”, founded and modelled on him. This means that the measuring stick is Jesus and his Gospel — not what we think, but what he says to us.

And so, we are talking about a narrow door not because only a few are destined to go through it, no, but because to belong to Christ means to follow him, to commit one’s life to love, in service and in giving oneself as he did, who passed through the narrow door of the cross. Entering into the project God proposes for our life requires that we restrict the space of selfishness, reduce the presumption of self-reliance, lower the heights of arrogance and pride, and that we overcome laziness, in order to pass through the risk of love, even when it involves the cross.

To be concrete, let’s think about those daily acts of love we struggle to carry out: let’s think of parents who dedicate themselves to their children, making sacrifices and renouncing time for themselves; of those who concern themselves with others and not only with their own interests. How many people are good like this; let’s think of those who spend themselves in service to the elderly, to the poorest and most vulnerable.

Let's think of those who keep on working, with commitment, putting up with discomfort and, perhaps, with misunderstanding. Let's think of those who suffer because of their faith, but who continue to pray and love. Let's think of those who, rather than following their own instincts, respond to evil with good, finding the strength to forgive and the courage to begin again. These are just a few examples of people who do not choose the wide door of their own convenience, but the narrow door of Jesus, of a life spent in love.

The Lord says today that God the Father will recognize them much more than those who believe they are already saved but who are actually "workers of injustice" in life (Lk 13, 27). Brothers and sisters, which side do we want to be on? Do we prefer the easy way of thinking only about ourselves, or do we choose the narrow door of the Gospel that puts our selfishness into crisis, but which makes us able to welcome the true life that comes from God and makes us happy? Which side are we on? May Our Eucharist help us to measure our life with Jesus so as to enter into full and eternal life.