

## **22<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR C**

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

Excerpts of Benedict XVI – *Angelus* - 02 September 2007

by Father Charles Fillion

31 August 2025

Brothers and sisters, did you know that today, is truly a day of grace? In the words of the Letter to the Hebrews: “You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God”. We have come to celebrate the Eucharist and to experience the joy of having come to receive our Lord Jesus Christ. God seeks people with great hearts who can make room for him in their lives. To accept a proposal as fascinating as the one Jesus offers us, to make the covenant with him, it is necessary to be capable of letting oneself be called into question, to set out with him on new roads. Jesus respects our freedom but never tires of proposing higher goals for life to us.

The Church continues to show the same attention. She sustains us with the gifts of sacramental grace. We are called to be involved in the new life that flows from the encounter with Christ to be apostles of his peace in your families, among your friends, within your parish community and in the various milieus in which you live and work.

However, some words of today’s readings really jump at us. It is precisely of humility that the first reading and the Gospel speak to us. Remember that we were created in the image and likeness of God. It is the humility of God who took flesh, who made himself small, and the humility of Mary who welcomed him into her womb; the humility of the Creator and the humility of us human being. Jesus, Son of God and Son of man, was born from this encounter of humility.

Already we hear in the Old Testament: “The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself” (Sirach 3: 18). In the Gospel, Jesus says: “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Lk 14: 11). Today, this perspective appears especially provocative to the culture and sensitivity of contemporary individual. The humble person is perceived as someone who gives up, someone defeated, someone who has nothing to say to the world.

Instead, this is the principal way, and not only because humility is a great human virtue but because, in the first place, it represents God’s own way of acting. It was the way chosen by Christ, who “being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). These words of God about humility is an important message which is especially current for those who want to follow Christ and belong to his Church.

This is the message: do not follow the way of pride but rather that of humility.

Go against the tide: do not listen to the swaying voices that today is marked by arrogance and violence, by oppression and success at any cost, by appearances and by having at the expense of human being. How many messages, which reach us especially through the mass media, are targeting us! Do not be afraid of being different and being criticized for what might seem to be losing or out of fashion; to see someone who dares to live according to the fullness of humanity revealed by Jesus Christ. The way of humility is not the way of renunciation but that of courage.

In following Christ, we must have the courage of humility; we must entrust ourselves humbly to the Lord, because only in this way will we be able to become docile instruments in his hands and allow him to do great things in us. For God, every individual person is unique, with his or her own name and face. As you see, the humility the Lord has taught us is quite different from giving up a way of life. We too can experience that “yes” of God to humanity from which flow all the “yeses” of our life.

It is true, the challenges we must face are many and important. The first however, is always that of following Christ to the very end without reservations and compromises. And following Christ means feeling part of his body which is the Church. One cannot call oneself a disciple of Jesus if one does not love and obey his Church. The Church is our family in which love for the Lord and for our brothers and sisters, enables us to experience the joy of already having a foretaste, now, of the future life that will be totally illuminated by Love.

May our daily commitment be to live here below as though we were already in Heaven above. It is a daily commitment to build communion and unity, overcoming all resistance and rising above every incomprehension. In the Church we learn to love, teaching ourselves to accept our neighbour freely, to show caring attention to those in difficulty, to the poor and to the forgotten. Following Christ also entails the constant effort to make one’s own contribution to building a society that is more just where all may enjoy the goods of the earth.

The Virgin Mary, our Mother, is our model of humility and courage. May she help us to be docile to the work of the Holy Spirit, as she was.

May this Eucharist help us to become ever more holy, disciples that are tireless missionaries of the Gospel among our peers in every corner of our life, regardless of where we are. Amen!