Monday of the Thirty-first Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 14:12-14): On a Sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees. He said to the host who invited him, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or sisters or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

"Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor… blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

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Today, the Lord teaches us the true meaning of Christian generosity: giving ourselves to others. "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or sisters or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment." (Lk 14:12).

A Christian moves through the world as an ordinary person; yet the foundation of his relationship with others cannot be human reward or self-glory. He must seek above all the glory of God, desiring no other reward than that of Heaven. "Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Lk 14:13–14).

The Lord invites us to give ourselves unconditionally to all people, motivated solely by love of God and neighbor for the Lord's sake. "If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount" (Lk 6:34).

This is because the Lord helps us understand that when we give generously, without expecting anything in return, God Himself will reward us abundantly and make us His beloved children. That is why Jesus tells us: "But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High" (Lk 6:35).

Let us ask the Blessed Virgin Mary for the generosity to flee from every trace of selfishness, as her Son did. "Selfish. Always looking after yourself. You seem incapable of feeling the fraternity of Christ. In those around you, you do not see brothers: you see stepping stones…" (Saint Josemaría).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “A word, a kindly smile, will often suffice to gladden a wounded and sorrowful heart.” (Saint Therese of the Child Jesus)

- “Jesus asks those who would follow him to love those who do not deserve it, without expecting anything in return, and in this way to fill the emptiness present in human hearts, relationships, families, communities and in the entire world.” (Francis)

- “The Eucharist commits us to the poor. To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 1,397)