

# Read



Sirach 3:17-18, 20,  
28-29

Psalm 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11

Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24a

Luke 14:1, 7-14

## LIVING THE WORD

### Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time September 1, 2019



#### REFLECTION

We live in a “me first” society. Some days, it seems that everyone is out for themselves. There can be a lot of pressure to be #1. In today’s Gospel story, Jesus talks about true worth. He challenges the people who want to be noticed at the top to look a bit deeper. Does sitting at a place of honor make them better than everyone else? Jesus suggests that, in the eyes of God, the beggars, crippled, lame, and blind are worth just as much as the person at the top. The star of the football team is just as important as the kid struggling to pass math. Succeeding at something and being good at it is commendable, but it doesn’t make someone who isn’t good at a certain thing less of a person. Jesus poked a hole in the balloon of pride of those who were thinking of just themselves. Instead, he spoke of humility. Humility doesn’t mean treating yourself like dirt. Humility is about modesty and respect for all of life. That’s where the true honor is.



#### ACTION

Quietly and without fanfare, do something for someone going through a hard time. Write a card of encouragement to a friend, offering them hope. Share lunch with someone who forgot theirs. Go sit down next to someone who often sits alone. Be nice to your sibling. Offer to help your parent with something instead of demanding that they do something for you. Jesus reminds us that it isn’t always about us. All those around us are our brothers and sisters. Reach out to someone!



Watch the movie *The Help* and reflect on how your actions in society can help change the world.



#### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Are you selfish or self-obsessed at times? What can you do to change that?



September 1, 2019

## TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### LECTIONARY #126C

Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29

Psalm 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11

Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24a

Luke 14:1, 7-14

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

In today's Gospel, Jesus' direction to those who were dining in the home of the Pharisee and to the host himself are on the surface very practical, and not unlike the prevailing social norms of the time. What sets Jesus' teaching apart is the underlying lesson on the value of humility, upon which we will focus.

**Q FOCUS:** *The humble are exalted.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

As we continue through the season of Ordinary Time, we explore essential qualities and elements of the life of faith. Just as the seasons of the year and of our lives move gradually from one to the next, so the liturgical seasons build one upon the previous and leading to the one to come.

### Church Teaching Connection

Humility is a state of mind and heart in which we recognize that God is the author of all that is good. We live in relationship to this good. Humility is, therefore, an essential spiritual stance, since it is only in humility that we can turn to God in prayer (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2559).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-14

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

On a sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully.

He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honor at the table. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honor. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him, and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, 'Give your place to this man,' and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place. Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he

may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position.' Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." Then 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 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."

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

Imagine walking into the end of the season banquet for a team or organization. Someone tells you to sit up front, and you take a place as directed. You and a couple of friends are talking, when someone walks up and says, loudly enough for everyone to hear, "You're in my seat. Can't you see that this table is reserved?" Not only would you quickly get up, wishing that no one would notice your mistake, you might also feel embarrassed. You would likely move to an out-of-the-way table, and hope that the focus will soon move to someone or something else. Or, perhaps you are accustomed to being front-and-center, and assumed that a place was waiting for you. Maybe you often, very purposefully, arrive just a little late in order to make your appearance.

You get the picture. And it is exactly this sort of situation that Jesus addresses in today's Gospel. At first, his comments seem little more than social advice for the people who are at dinner with him: don't sit in a place with too much prominence, because someone more important might arrive and

you would be required to move. Rather, take the lowest spot and you may be invited to move to a more noteworthy place.

### ► What is your experience?

When you gather with others socially, are there people who want to be noticed, or whose arrival is always met with attention from others? Are you one of those people? Have you experienced, or witnessed someone else experiencing, the sort of table turning Jesus describes in today's Gospel?

Jesus is not giving simple social advice, however. Right in the middle of his address to his dinner companions is the heart of his message: "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

In Jesus' time, as is sometimes the case in our day, to be humble was seen as being weak, to be less than one could be. Humility was viewed not as a virtue, but a weakness to be avoided.

### ► What do you think humility is all about?

Humility comes from the root word *humus*, which means "from the earth," or "to be grounded." When we use this word as people of faith, it is in recognition that God is the origin of all that is good. We are not. This is a way of keeping ourselves and our lives in perspective. Not a negative perspective, since each of us has been created by God, and is given life and gifts in order to share God's love with others.

Share an example of someone who is humble (maybe you!).

Sometimes we get confused about humility. We think that we are to keep our gifts and true selves hidden, fearing that if we allow our positive qualities to be seen, we might be viewed as being prideful. This is not true humility, however. The humble person acknowledges his or her gifts and celebrates them as blessings from God. The sharing of our gifts in this view is a way of giving glory to God, whose goodness is seen through sharing, caring, and acting as God's people.

## Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 22.*

Do you ever hide your best self in fear that others might think you are proud?

How do you express humility in your day-to-day interactions with others?

In what aspect of your life do you need to grow in humility?

## Act on the Word

### Real or Fake Humility

If your group is large, divide into smaller groups of five to six teens. Otherwise, remain together for this conversation. Invite the teens to talk about times in which they had a true sense of humility. Ask them to describe moments in which they might be tempted to “fake” humility, out of concern that others might think they are full of themselves. How do they spot fake humility? How might they encourage each other to genuinely offer themselves and their gifts when it is possible and appropriate to do so?

### Humility in the Public Eye

*Magazines or internet access will be helpful for this activity. Also, have on hand newsprint, markers, and glue. You might also use computer, tablets, and a printer.*

Divide into teams of four to six teens. Give each team a sheet of newsprint and supply of magazines or have computers or tablets and a printer available. Tell the teens they are on a scouting expedition. They are to spot humility in action in the news, lives of people who are public figures, and people in their school, parish, and local community.

Ask the teens to make a collage that represents humility in the public eye. What about this humility is compelling? What characterizes genuine humility when it is seen or experienced? What do they learn from this?

Each scouting team is to find as many and varied examples of humility as possible. You might set a specific number of examples in each category (national or local, public figure or personally known). When the teams are finished, ask a representative from each group to share their examples.

## Heartfelt Humility

*You will need paper and pens for this exercise.*

Give the teens a few minutes to quietly think about their personal experience with humility. For some, this may be an exercise in acknowledging that they are often “exalted” rather than humble. For others, they may have true humility and are ignored or kept on the margins of their social circles as a result. For some, they may generally hide their true selves through a false sense of humility that needs to be brought in check.

Invite the teens to journal about their reflection. Play quiet music, and every few minutes say aloud, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 14:11).

If you know your group and feel secure in doing so, invite the teens to share in small groups or with the larger group. Respond to their sharing by affirming the ways they live and show genuine humility, and encourage those who acknowledge ways in which they need to grow in this.

## Closing Prayer

*God of all,  
your Son, Jesus, brings Good News to the poor,  
the needy, and the week,  
promising them a place of honor around your  
banquet table in heaven.  
Grant us the wisdom and humility  
to recognize ourselves among them,  
and to turn toward your grace every day to  
sustain us.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.*