

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

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 28, 2022



REFLECTION

In May 2017, author Neil Gaiman told a story on his Tumblr about attending an exclusive gathering full of people he admired. Gaiman couldn't help feeling that he didn't belong in such an exalted group, and he was relieved when a fellow attendee—also named Neil—expressed the same misgivings. It turns out, the other Neil was Neil Armstrong!

Had Armstrong or Gaiman been at the Pharisee's dinner, they would likely have seated themselves at the foot of the table—not because they think poorly of themselves, but because they think so highly of others. Today's Gospel reminds us that what will ultimately matter is not what we have said about ourselves but rather how well we have shown love and respect for others.

ACTION

What is it that makes people overestimate their own value? The "Dunning-Kruger effect" describes the way incompetent people tend to overestimate their own abilities. Meanwhile, competent people are more likely to undervalue their own performance.

Why are we such bad judges of ourselves? Dunning and Kruger suggested that the test takers in their study overestimated their scores because they didn't know the subject well enough to recognize their mistakes. In contrast, high achievers have a growth mindset and are constantly looking for more skilled people to learn from.

This week, try to spend time with a Christian role model who inspires you. What can you learn from how they live, pray, and serve? What areas of potential growth do you see for yourself?



Learn about the moon landing and Neil Armstrong's thoughts on the mission. https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/apollo11.html

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How does this week's reading tie into the theme from last week? Which do you relate to more?
- ❖ Has this week's reading changed how you think about humility?



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TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #126C

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

Psalms 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

The sharing of meals was an important part of the culture of Jesus' day. Certain protocols were common and expected to be followed. They are certainly highlighted here in this reading from Luke. Esteem or honor is bestowed or understood by the group. Being given a place of honor is not based on a person's opinions of themselves, but rather their social standing. Jesus uses this knowledge to continue his teaching on humility. The kingdom of God upends the cultural system and bestows honor on the marginalized, because God has given them honor that society has refused.

Q FOCUS: Give without worrying about being repaid. Be humble and allow God to raise you up.

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week the church celebrates St. Augustine, whose feast day is August 28. His theological teachings are foundational for many Church teachings today. He was very influential in the early Church and helped it remain true against false teachings. His journey to faith was a long road, which was aided by his mother, St. Monica, constantly praying for his conversion. You can read about his faith journey in his autobiographical account entitled *Confessions*.

Church Teaching Connection

"A key point in which God and man differ is pride: in God there is no pride, for he is wholly fullness and is wholly oriented to loving and giving life instead in we human beings pride is deeply rooted and requires constant vigilance and purification. We, who are small, aspire to appear great, to be among the first, whereas God who is truly great is not afraid of humbling himself and putting himself last" (Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus Message, September 23, 2012).

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:

Today, Jesus eats at the home of one of the Pharisees. We hear many stories in the Gospel accounts that include the Pharisees and usually they are at odds with Jesus. However, Jesus wasn't always against the Pharisees; some were even his friends. While at the home of a Pharisees, he tells a parable to all who are gathered.

Jesus tells the guests that they should pick the humblest seat at the table and not choose places of honor. During those days, assigned seating was very important and noted your social status. Upon arrival guests would have to judge themselves and others and sit accordingly. It would be disgraceful to place yourself in a seat of honor only to be asked to move.

► **Have you ever judged someone based on how they looked or the status you perceive they hold?**

► **Have you ever tried to figure out your social standing in a group? How did that feel?**

The solution for Jesus is simple. Place yourself at the lowest position. While this may seem to be a ridiculous idea, it actually works on two levels. First, it allows you to be humble and let go of the social and cultural norms that dictate status. It should not, however, become an opportunity for false humility or humblebragging. Rather, it is a true humility. You know who you are, and where your worth comes from. You willingly place yourself in a humble position.

Second, it allows the host to recognize who you are and invite you to a place of higher status. Rising up the ranks does not come from you, but from the one who invited you.

► **What are some ways that we can create a culture of humility in our social circles? This might be challenging, but are there practical things a young person might do to lead a more humble life (and thus lead others by example)?**

As always, Jesus takes it one step further. It is applied not just to our personal placement, but also to how we treat others. He tells us that when we have a party to invite those who cannot repay us. He specifically says the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. In doing so, there can be no repayment. We are not inviting them to advance ourselves, but to do the work of Christ.

Jesus is inviting us to welcome those whom we ought to love. People, perhaps, that we have not yet made room for in our hearts. Make no mistake, Jesus is asking us to invite our friends; his friends. He is asking us to change our perspective of who is valued in society.

Jesus loves those on the margins. Look at his life and his circle of friends. They did not include the rich and powerful. His friends were the laborer, the tax collector, and the frustrated revolutionary. He spent time with widows and women shunned by society. He sought the sick and the outcast. He loved them.

Jesus invites us to do the same in our everyday lives. Erase the labels that separate "us" and "them" and allow us to be one. Form genuine friendships with those who cannot pay us back, who are rejected, and marginalized.

► What might this look like at school or on teams?

Let us not just give to the poor but let us be poor as the beatitude commands. Let us unite ourselves in real relationships with those who experience poverty or are marginalized and see that we are one. When we do that, truly it will be a joyous party and we will experience God's kingdom on earth.

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 14.

Jesus, who is great, is not afraid to put himself last. We should do the same.

Jesus invites us to make room in our hearts to truly love those on the margins.

Part of being humble is knowing our place in relationship to God and others.

Act on the Word

Serving Others

For this activity, you will need materials for a preplanned service project, or if using this activity time to plan a service project, a white board or butcher paper for group brainstorming and writing supplies for small groups.

If you are doing a service project during this time, begin or end by having small group discussions about how each person can use their unique gifts from God to serve others. What does this look like when you are doing service as a group? How can it inspire each young person to make service a habit? How does it help us remain humble?

If you are planning a service project, the following outline will help your group plan a project that serves the needs of the community. This planning can be done as a large group, but small groups would be preferred.

- ✧ Identify the needs of the community.
- ✧ Assess the group's strengths. What can they contribute to answer the need of the community?
- ✧ Brainstorm an achievable project. If done first in small groups, after projects are discussed, bring them to the larger group to present. Rank possible projects and proceed with next steps.
- ✧ Create a plan by identifying the goal of the project, choosing service dates, and considering any logistical concerns.
- ✧ Discuss a budget. Consider if the whole parish community could become involved in fundraising for a certain cause.
- ✧ Even if fundraising will not be involved, consider promoting your project to your parish community to involve the whole faith community.
- ✧ And finally, enjoy your time of service!

Closing Prayer

*Lord God,
you make a place and home for all.*

*May we serve you and your people,
making known the message
of your love and compassion.*

*Guide our efforts at building
your kingdom.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,*

God, for ever and ever.

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. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.