

**The Banquet of the Kingdom of God
(22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)**

Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29—Conduct Your Affairs with Humility

1. Meekness: perform your works in “meekness” or “humility” (Greek *prautēs*) (3:17)
2. Humility: you must “humble” or “lower” yourself (Greek *tapeinos*) (3:18)
3. The Lord: shows “favor” (Greek *charis*) to and is “glorified” by the “humble” (3:20)

Psalm 68—God’s Hospitality to the Poor

1. Hospitality: he gives the desolate “a home to dwell in” (v. 6)
2. Reversal: he leads “prisoners” to “prosperity” (v. 6)

Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24—The Heavenly Jerusalem

1. Heavenly Jerusalem: believers journey to the heavenly, not earthly Jerusalem (12:22)

Luke 14:1, 7-14—The Banquet of the Kingdom of God

1. Setting: Jesus is in the house of a “ruler” of the Pharisees (14:1)
2. Parable for the Guests at the Banquet (14:7-11)
 - a. Seats: “first [spots] at banquets” (Greek *prōtoklisias*; cf. Luke 20:46)
 - b. Wedding Feast: image for Kingdom of God (cf. Matt 22:2; Isa 25:6-8)
 - c. Humility: “do not sit down in a place of honor” (14:8)
 - d. Self-Exaltation → Humiliation
 - e. Self-Humiliation → Exaltation
3. Parable for the Host of the Banquet (14:12-14)
 - a. Banquet: a “dinner” or “banquet” (=midday dinner or evening supper) (14:12)
 - b. Guests: “do not invite” friends, family, or rich neighbors
 - c. Earthly Repayment: avoid being “repaid”
 - d. Guests: invite “the poor, the maimed, the lam, and the blind”
 - e. Eschatological Repayment: “the resurrection of the righteous” (cf. Dan 12:2-3)

The Living Tradition

St. Benedict of Nursia: Holy Scripture proclaims to us brothers: “Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted” (Lk. 14:11)... Therefore, brothers, if we wish to reach the highest peak of humility and soon arrive at the heavenly heights, we must, by our good deeds, set up a ladder like Jacob’s, upon which he saw angels climbing up and down. Without doubt, we should understand that climbing as showing us that we go up by humbling ourselves and down by praising ourselves... *We may think of the sides of the ladder as our body and soul, the rungs as the steps of humility and discipline we must climb...*

Step 1: obeying all of God’s commandments

Step 2: not bothering to please yourself

Step 3: obedience to your superior

The Mass Readings Explained

Step 4: patient and quiet perseverance of everything inflicted on you

Step 5: humble and thorough confession of your sins and faults

Step 6: acceptance of crude and harsh tasks

Step 7: not only confessing that you are inferior, but believing it in your heart

Step 8: strict observance of a rule of life

Step 9: practice of silence; only speaking when necessary

Step 10: restraint from laughter and frivolity

Step 11: speaking few words, simply and seriously

Step 12: showing humility in your heart and in your appearance and actions. (*Rule of St. Benedict*, Chapter 7; trans. A. C. Meisel and M. L. del Mastro)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

1. What does the book of Sirach teach about the necessity of humility? Is it different from the teaching of Jesus?

2. Where are the “twists” in each of Jesus’ parables of the banquet? What would have been surprising to his first-century Jewish audience?

3. Why is humility so important for disciples of Jesus?

For Further Study

1. Pablo Gadenz. *The Gospel of Luke*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. Pp. 263-66
2. *The Rule of Saint Benedict*. Translated by Anthony C. Meisel and M. L. del Mastro. New York: Image Books, 1975.