**28 AUGUST – XXII SUNDAY O.T. [C]**

**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.**

**Every disciple of Jesus is called to study, letting himself be helped by the Holy Spirit, his Teacher, so that he may imitate Him in all things, always guided and led by the most pure wisdom, understanding, science of the Spirit of God, though, who must nourish his heart as oxygen stokes fire and gives it the greatest splendour. If the Christian does not study Christ Jesus – and this is the only study necessary to him – he will go through history without introducing in it any truth, necessary for his salvation, his redemption, his sanctification. Who is the Christian and what is his mission? The Christian is the one who is called to bring the light of Christ Jesus in history, in each history, family, social, economic, financial, scientific, political, military history. He must also fill his life with the light of Christ the Lord. Today Jesus is in a Pharisee's house and He notices how every man is seeking ephemeral, vain glory. How one makes his life depend on the place he occupies in a banquet. If he occupies the first place he feels full of himself. Instead, if one must occupy the last place, he feels as impaired, deprived of something. He immediately intervenes and puts the truth in everyone's heart. The place does not make man. Instead, man gives glory to the place. If man is rich in God, in any place he sits, he will always honour the place with his richness in truth, righteousness, peace. Instead, if he is filled with vices, he will dishonour the place occupied by him with his pride, lust, wrath, gluttony, envy, sloth, greed, foolishness and ignorance. Foolish by nature is the one who thinks that the place changes his nature, and from nature not brought into truth he makes it become nature of truth. Nature always remains unchanged. However, Jesus adds a truth that is difficult to accept today, since one is proclaiming the universal equality. The society is made up of many roles, many tasks, much work. For each of these roles, one acquires a particular dignity. There is the dignity of the chief priest, of the prince, of the chief of the synagogue, of the scribe, of the teacher. Now these dignities must be honoured. If a chief priest comes, it is a right thing to give him the first place. He is a person whose ministry is more significant. Then one makes a bad impression if one is invited to give up his place to the chief priest to occupy the last place. Instead, one receives honour, when from the last place the master of the house invites to occupy one of the first place. One must never think that the honour comes from the place. The honour is of the person. The person must find the reasons of his honour in himself. The person is the one who honours every place, if it is filled with God and with every virtue.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 14,1.7-14**

**On a sabbath he 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."**

**In the teaching of Jesus, there is another principle that must be highlighted: everything we do must always be done in view of an eternal gain. This is why nothing must be done for a miserable earthly glory. The earthly glory fades away as the dew with the first rays of light. The eternal glory will have no end. Only God can give us this glory and He gives it to us if we have worked for Him. How does one work for Him? Inviting Him in our banquets. How does one invite Him? Inviting the poor of the earth, who are those who can never invite us in their turn. We invite them, inviting the Lord. The invited Lord will enjoy our meal and as a reward He will invite us to his eternal table. The earning goes beyond all expectation. If I invite one to be invited in my turn, I do nothing for the Lord. He owns me nothing. Instead, if I invite Him, the Lord, to my banquet, He will invite me to his eternal banquet. My banquet lasts one moment, his one lasts for the eternity. The earning is beyond all expectation. However, here one enters the faith. Is the Christian not the one who lives of faith? If he lives of faith, he must listen to this Word of Jesus, as well. From the faith in this Word, he will be invited to the eternal banquet in the blessed heaven. Everything that does not come from faith is a sin for the Christian, for he does not live according to the Word of Christ to whom he owns every obedience. But today who believes that one joins the banquet if we have made the Word of Jesus our rule of life and we have given every obedience to it? The one who must help the Christian to believe in this Word is the Christian. How will he help him? Obeying the Word and exhorting to obey. If the Christian does not help the other Christian, one will hardly live according to the Gospel. The help is necessary and it is the first charity. May the Mother of Jesus introduce us in this most pure truth. May She give us every light to live the truth of the Gospel.**