

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Oct 31st 2015

The Chosen People awaited—hopefully and achingly--the coming of their Messiah. So many hopes and dreams were riding on that longed-for day.

Not all were ready for Christ when he came, however.

Christ lamented many in the religious establishment. He saw the way they liked to be greeted obsequiously in the public square. The way they did everything for show. The way they saw themselves somehow fit to judge others.

They were, sad to behold, blind to their self-satisfaction and hunger for communal status.

The social jockeying at a dinner party prompts Christ to issue a challenge.

His suggestion to start from a point of humility upsets the apple cart of the conventional scheme of self-promotion.

There's a touch of humor in his suggestion. Also irony. To posit humility as a way of gaining honor wouldn't help his hearers to the change of heart he is trying to lead them to. In the end, they would still be stuck in their ambition.

But if one makes the leap from the literal suggestion to the imaginative—humility as a starting point for another kind of honor in an entirely different orbit, the kind one finds in the Kingdom of heaven—then the door of transformation opens.

There one finds the meek, the pure of heart, and honor borne of service.

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