

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Nov 4th 2017

Memorial of Saint Charles Borromeo, Bishop

“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”.

Humility, Generosity, Caring and Love are the messages from the Gospel of Luke this week. Jesus chooses to give this lesson at a banquet or a meal. Mealtime has been a symbol of unity since the beginning of time. Sharing a meal together symbolizes nourishment, community, love, caring, family, celebration, comfort and support. Mealtime is a time of togetherness no matter how or where it is experienced. It can be a time that an ‘olive branch’ is extended for smoothing over troubles. It can be a time where people meet for the first time. The fact that Jesus uses mealtime as a significant component of this parable provides context and symbolizes importance. The message of caring, humility, generosity and love at meal time are very powerful for me. Besides the symbolism of sharing a meal Jesus emphasizes humility. Through the experience of humility honor is awarded not self-proclaimed; power and prestige are abandoned; the focus becomes the ‘power’ of humility.

I recognize my need to take the seat of humility and watch and listen.

In reflection, I interpret from this parable the caring and love that Jesus extends to me. I am special just as I am. I am loved. I can take the ‘lesser seat’ at the table because I am loved regardless. The love of Jesus embraces me for who I am and being loved allows me to extend that love to others. Jesus ensures me that love is not exclusive or righteous but should be given to all. If I experience that love then I can then extend that love to others. Greg Boyle S.J. says it well “be ready to show others how they are important, do not go out to the margins to draw lines but erase them....this leads to kinship and connection and community....a tenderness for one another”. If I take the seat of humility at the far end of the table and watch and listen I can share my love for all those who sit at the table and beyond. I can experience relationships with others who in turn will magnify my learning, extend my love more and lead to the kingdom of heaven. Because I am loved by God.

Cindy Costanzo -Creighton University's College of Nursing