**ORDINARY TIME 22 C Lectionary Catechesis**

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**Guardian Angels Parish in Mead, CO**

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| Prophets confront the status quo, the business-as-usual attitude, current power structures, and Jesus is in the prophetic lineage. His parables, which reflect his own life, urge a kind of humility as opposed to a religious exceptionalism. And always in the background is the question of how we will stand at last in the divine presence of the Father at the end. |

**FIRST READING: Sirach 3, 17-18. 20. 28-29**

One of the Catholic books in the Bible, Sirach is an extensive letter from a father to his son, who is about to leave home and make his own way in the world. This loving father wills the best for his son; he writes his advice so that the son can be a just and faithful man. Here, the father encourage and recommends humility, which is valued the more one becomes great in the eyes of the world. Here, the father shows that knowing one’s place in the greater scheme of things is a prize and wins greater esteem at the end of the day and in the sight of God. Humility is practiced relative to intellectual pursuits of knowledge and wisdom. Listening is superior to talking and arguing, especially listening to proverbs, which suggests the wisdom of the simple as opposed to philosophical discourses. Finally, in the last verse an analogy is given about water and alms which atones for sins. Our passage is a text of three parts from Sirach 3. There’s some disagreement here about the numbering of the verses in the letter. Along with humility in this chapter, the father connects docility, and then both create a generous heart for alms for the poor.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | According to the Catechism, who are the first and foremost educators of children in the ways of faith and morals?  What is “wisdom literature” and specifically “proverbs” in the Bible? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Living in an internet age, mail such as letters are very ephemeral. But do have an treasured written letters from parents or grandparents? What’s their advice?  What does humility mean to you? Give a concrete example from a story. |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Why is humility a great virtue in the work of evangelization?  Share your thoughts on the meaning of the phrase “things too sublime.” |
| **WORSHIP** | How do alms exactly atone for sins?  Mass requires an “attentive ear” as there is much listening. How can such close listening by a way of participating in the Mass? |

**First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Psalm 68, 4-5. 6-7. 10-11**

Psalm 68 reviews the history of the Exodus story; as God had saved Israel in the past, so God will save Israel in the future. For this, God is to be trusted, praised, and worship by the people of the covenant. God here is named “the rider of clouds”, portrayed at once as the master of the natural world, and at the same time in the Temple in Jerusalem where he securely dwells and which he himself will repair so the the poor and prisoners will find a safe dwelling with Him. Perhaps even the creatures of the natural world (vs. 11) will find a home in the Temple; they certainly need some kind of protection from out of control and arrogant humans. Remember that the Temple according to I Kings 7 is adorned on the inside with a portrayal of a luxurious new paradise of natural abundance.

**Vs. 6: CCC 238** Under the rubric of God the Father, we learn that God is Father as creator, Father of Israel, Father of the King, Father of the poor, the widowed and the orphaned in Biblical texts.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What kind of a Father is God?  What is a proverb? Why are they a part of a certain kind of wisdom tradition? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What is your line of community service to the needy?  Do you sing at Mass? If not, why not? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Does an evangelizing person have to have all the answers? Why not?  How does the work of evangelization provide for the needy? |
| **WORSHIP** | Share your reflection on the fact that the majority of the prayers at Mass are addressed to God the Father.  Where is the rejoicing and joy in your community or parish liturgy? |

**Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: Hebrews 12, 18-19. 22-24a**

Of course for the Precious Blood Community, this is the quote on the sanctuary mosaic at the former North American Province central house in Ohio. It is quite spectacular, and has mostly withstood the test of time. I’m sure there were those at the time who disagreed with the expense. Unfortunately Vs. 24b is not included, where the sprinkled blood of the covenant is specifically noted. The emphasis today would be on the “blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel.” In other words, a homiletic advocacy on behalf of the poor and marginalized is given full throat here, as we speak of the “cry of the blood” and the “call of the blood.” We live in a world of bloodshed and violence. In heaven the time of fear and trembling before God is over, and a reign of God established as an approachable festival for the elect. Here it is Jesus, setting aside for a moment his identity as Christ, who calls and gathers us and saves us in His precious blood. We become sealed in the blood, and our admission into heaven is secured, not in fear, but in festal joy in the company of the angels. It is a very positive apocalyptic scene of grandeur and joy. Note that here the wedding imagery of Revelation 21 is missing, but only a new covenant. This apocalyptic scene context also uses the more general image of ‘shaking out the harvest wheat’ and the language of fire.

**Vss. 22-23: CCC 2188** Christians should promote religious holidays as holidays for all in a country in order to give public witness through worship of their faith. Sundays are always a time for rest and family to remember God’s blessings.

**Vs. 23: CCC 1021** Particular judgment end the time for the human person to choose; it is an aspect of one’s final encounter with Christ. Then, the human person is rewarded or not for their actions. Lazarus and Dives parable is the premier example of this. Another aspect is the final destiny of the human person, to be with God in heaven.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why is it that the Bible uses language such as “fear of God”?  What is the assembly of the firstborn? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What things do you do to show that you are awed by the divine presence of God?  What does it mean that you “have drawn near to . . . Jesus?” |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | How can we share this powerful and almost apocalyptic vision in evangelization?  What or where is “the blood that speaks” in our world today? |
| **WORSHIP** | What are the ritual things we do as we enter a church building? Why do we do them?  In what way does our Eucharistic Liturgy reflect this powerful scene? |

**Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Luke 14, 1. 7-14 Parable of the Wedding Guest and the Invitation to All**

Here, Jesus is dining at the house of a “leading” authority on a Sabbath. The scene and time are set for a confrontation between the legalists and the prophet. Between this opening verse, Jesus heals a man which further intensifies the questions that Jesus’ actions raise; the “people” and their leaders are silenced. Jesus speaks “parabolically” to them, after observing the shuffling for the best seats. Jesus is a keen observer of the human condition in our pride, greed, and jealousy. Vss. 7-10 is the parable of th wedding guests in competition for the best seats, only to be confronted by the host to move lower down the table because a more prominent guest needs the better seat. Vss. 11-14 are a series of sayings of Jesus spun from the parable: 1. About the first and the last, 2. About self-exaltation and humility, 3. About who should be inclusively invited to the banquet. Jesus concludes with a saying about the resurrection of the righteous, who are the are the marginalized and disabled instead of the self-promoting Pharisees. The contrasting words in the parable are “shame” and “honor”, two very important dynamics in Hellenistic and Ancient Near Eastern culture. Luke uses four different words for the banquet: This parable and its sayings will then prompt a further and longer parable of the wedding banquet given by a king whose guest are unable to attend, which the lectionary skips.

**Vs. 1: CCC 575, 588** Religious and political authorities of his time did not understand Jesus, yet some sought him out with their positive questions, such as Nicodemus. Some of the Pharisees’ teachings are incorporated into the teachings of Jesus, eg. calling God the Father, forms of piety, etc. On the other hand, he confounded them by eating with the poor and sinners. He declared that the self-righteousness of the Pharisees was not justified.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | In light of #575 above, how much do you think religious authorities of today understand Jesus?  Parables are prophetic teaching devices among other things meant to subvert the business-as-usual attitude of religious authorities and the regular people. What needs challenging in our Church today? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What do you make of the statements about “first shall be last” and the other sayings in the second half of our gospel this week?  When does self-esteem, pride, and greed get in the way of your faithful discipleship? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Identify any groups in your area who may not feel invited to the banquet of the Eucharist in your parish or community?  Who do you invite to sit at your table? |
| **WORSHIP** | Name any ritual purity laws within Catholicism. Explain.  Why is it that instead of thanking God, some people come away feeling superior to others and defeat the who purpose? |

**Gospel**

**Next Sunday: OT 23 C: Wisdom 9, 13-18b; Ps 90, 3-4. 5-6. 12-13. 14-17; Philemon 9-10. 12-17; Luke 14, 25-33**