

## A Humble Attitude Serves Evangelization

In today's Gospel we hear Jesus' parable about the wedding feast and how the invited guests were choosing their places at table. He is cautioning his followers to have a humble opinion of their personal importance. Though all have been invited to the feast, it is the wedding host who has the prerogative to properly seat them at table. Jesus then proclaims a clear principle: "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk 14:11).

We are reminded of another parable in Luke's Gospel (Lk 18:9-14). This is the story of the Pharisee and the Publican tax collector going to the temple to pray. Jesus contrasts their attitudes: the Pharisee tells God about his righteousness; the Publican simply pleads: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Note that Jesus also concludes this parable, saying "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk 18:14).

Pope Francis provides us with insights on genuine humility. "If God prefers humility it is not to debase us: humility is the necessary precondition for being lifted up again by Him, so as to experience the mercy that comes to fill our emptiness. The prayer of the arrogant does not reach God's heart, but the humility of the wretched opens it up. God has a predilection for the humble and, encountering a humble heart, He opens His own fully" (6-1-16). Again, "in Mary we see that humility is not a virtue of the weak but of the strong who do not have to treat others badly to feel important" (8-13-17).

Indeed, all evangelizers need the attitude of humble servants. Humility is a clear sign of the messenger's authenticity. Humility attracts; humility evangelizes. As Pope Francis noted in his homily at the beginning of his pontificate (3-19-13): "Let us never forget that authentic power is service!"