

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sirach 3:17-18,20,28-29
 Ps 68:4-7, 10-11
 Heb 12:18-19,22-24a
 Luke 14:1,7-14

Monday August 29 Passion of John the Baptist

1 Corinthians 2:1-5
 Ps 119:97-102
 Mark 6:17-29

Tuesday August 30

1 Corinthians 2:10b-16
 Ps 145:8-14
 Luke 4:31-37

Wednesday August 31

1 Corinthians 3:1-9
 Ps 33:12-15,20-21
 Luke 4:38-44

Thursday September 1

1 Corinthians 3:18-23
 Ps 24:1b-6
 Luke 5:1-11

Friday September 2

1 Corinthians 4:1-5
 Ps 37:3-6,27-28,39-40
 Luke 5:33-39

Saturday September 3 St. Gregory the Great

1 Corinthians 4:6b-15
 Ps 145:17-21
 Luke 6:1-5

This Sunday's Gospel reading raises the question: What are my expectations (my motivations) when I do good? How other-centered are they? How *self*-centered?

If benefiting others is done for the sake of receiving something in return, our motive is not Christ-like.

Jesus explains this with the example of inviting to a banquet those who cannot return the favor. He's not saying that we have to do this to be holy. That interpretation would be too literal; it misses the point.

The real message is that whatever we do, we should do it for the sake of love, rather than for repayment, i.e., for our own gain. We should do good to others for the sake of the benefit it will give to them. This seems like a no-brainer, but stop for a minute to think about how much you'd like to be thanked and appreciated. What else do

you hope to get from the good you do?

Even when someone sins against us and we pray for them to repent, our prayer should be offered out of concern for their souls. Sure, we also wish they would change so that our own lives will be easier, but that should not be our primary concern.

As followers of Christ, if we receive any blessings in return for the good we do, that's our bonus, not our motive. We can rightly look forward to such bonuses, but our joy does not depend on them.



By becoming aware of our motives and expectations, we gain the freedom to

choose to be more like Jesus. As he promised, "You will receive your reward at the resurrection of the righteous." The fulfillment of this promise begins now, in the moment that we decide to be like the Resurrected One, our Lord Jesus.

The reward he gives us here and now is the grace that enables us to do whatever he asks and to do it generously and cheerfully. We'll receive other blessings besides, but that's not our main motive.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How upset do you get when others treat you unkindly after you've been nice to them?
2. When the give-and-take in a relationship is unequal, do you withhold goodness from that person?
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you notice your selfish motives this week. Take your anger to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and ask Jesus to empower you to care more about those people who have been upsetting you.
4. Describe a situation when you gave more than you received. How did God bless you in that? How was your sacrifice an example of Christ?