

**(Food for thought)**

Gospel: Luke 14:1, 7-14.

**Moving Up and Out.....**



The story in today's Gospel has much to teach us about God and about ourselves. In the Gospel of Luke, a banquet was always associated with the Eucharist, and so Jesus' teachings around a table alert us to what Luke also wants to teach us about Eucharist. Luke presents his gospel in a way that makes the Eucharist and Christ's message inseparable. He does this by framing his gospel narrative as a great journey; and along the way, meals and hospitality play a critical role for Jesus and his followers. The disciples are people who have received hospitality and reclined at table with Jesus and so they must be like their Master and offer similar hospitality to others, especially the poor and outcast.

The message of Jesus is not one of silent meekness. It is a challenge to action, a call to

giftedness, to peace, to mutual respect and support. In the Gospel, Jesus sets down a very basic principle: Be willing to be considered the last, and the least - and then prove yourself. Let your goodness, your gifts become evident, so that you will be invited to "come up higher." Be respectful of those around you; acknowledge talent and effort and success in others, without jealousy or envy. As you move upward, bring others up with you. Be a peacemaker, a reconciler, not a spoiler or a divider.

There needs to be a shift in our perception of God, from The One who looks down on us, to The One who looks upon us with love, and can smile at what he sees. To think correctly about the Church, we must adapt our vision accordingly. We must realize that we are not simply a liturgical church, concerned only with rubric and the "how" of worship. We are a Eucharistic community, which gathers together to be nourished by the bread of Life and who leave the table to become that bread for others.

Thomas Merton once wrote that the only way in which we can at last enter into the possession of the reality of God, which lies at the very roots of our existence, is to stop talking about it - and to grasp the reality... laying our hands on it, by just living it out in our daily lives.

Only then will we truly come to know who Jesus is, and who we really are.

