

## 30th Sunday Ordinary Time Year C

### Sunday Reflection

#### Looking at neighbors with contempt

How do you feel when your neighbour look at you with contempt?

Ben Sira taught his son and descendants that God is the most honest neighbour. God has no favourites. No personage corrupts God's choice. God hears the grievances of the widow; He listens to the orphans; and He attends to the one who is injured. He listens carefully to the prayer of the humble. God is restless until he crushes the crook. (Sirach 35:12-14. 16-19)

Paul first went to court to defend himself; his friends abandoned him. The worse happened when Alexander, the coppersmith, acted wickedly towards Paul; he strongly opposed Paul's preaching. Paul had nobody as witness on his side; but God showed unconditional assistance to Paul. Jesus' presence empowered Paul against the lion's den. Despite the hurt, Paul had no evil intention; he prayed for everyone: "May the Lord show mercy for their evil deeds!" (2 Timothy 4:6-8, 14, 16-18; 1 Timothy 1:20)

Jesus laughed at the practice of self-righteousness. He told his followers a story. In the Temple of Jerusalem, a good man thanks God for his remarkable achievements and he asks God to reward his virtue and good deeds. But while this man is busy praising himself, God is busy listening to a crook, a tax collector, who says to him: "God be merciful to me, a sinner". The prayer of the humble person appeals to the ears of God. (Luke 18:9-14)

Achievements do not make kings but neighbours do. You do many good things. You often thank and pray God; you say 200 Ave Maria daily; you often fast one hour before Eucharist; no meat enters your mouth on Fridays; you participate in the Holy Mass; you received all the sacraments; you are a member of church's groups or associations, you pay tithe and make donations to the church. All these practices show your religiosity. But to show your holiness of life, you need right relationship with neighbours.

Assist your neighbour with your presence. Stop looking at people with disdain. It is a crime to seek for ways to humiliate another person. Relate with people in love and mercy. Be honest to God. Be honest to neighbour. Acknowledge your wrongdoing and change your life. God is restless until he rescues you from the lion's den. God is faithful.

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