

*First of all I just want to say that each and every one of you are a gift to me. I am grateful to God for each one of you.*

Imagine the feast of this wealthy Pharisee: the most delicious, gourmet food money could buy: roast lamb, freshly baked bread, the best wine. They are reclining at the table, laying on their sides, propped up on their elbow.

Everyone is “watching” Jesus. They are watching whether he washes his hands (Lk 11:38); what he eats; where he sits.

First, Jesus gives a parable to teach that whoever humbles himself will be exalted, and whoever exalts himself will be humbled. Then, what Jesus does next was probably seen as rude and insulting to the host. Here he is, a guest, telling the host how to behave! He tells him, when you hold a meal, *“invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”*

Jesus would have been seen as not only rude, but CRAZY: invite people who CANNOT invite you back? Nobody does that! The culture was, “I scratch your back, you scratch mine”, I invite you to a feast, you invite me to yours. He’s inviting them to take the eternal perspective, to be like God, to give without expecting return.

Recently I had dinner at the new Common Grounds Cafe in Cass City. It’s pay as you cant. It’s a ministry to the community. If someone can’t afford to pay anything, they get a free meal! Everyone is invited, the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind! The owners are blessed because of the inability of some people to repay them. **I look forward to seeing how God will repay them, “at the resurrection of the righteous”!**

In Flint there is an organization called the St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center. Sr. Carol Weber is one of the founders and the current DIRECTOR. She is the sister of our parish family member Ernie Messing. The mission of the NEW Life Center is “providing life skills, education and workplace training, empowering women and men to become self-sufficient.... In addition to employment preparation programs, we also operate two social enterprises, a food pantry that serves over 3,000 people monthly, and a variety of community services, including crisis intervention, childcare, and a literacy center.” Sr. Carol, the staff and volunteers are blessed because of the inability of people to repay them. **I look forward to seeing how God will repay them, “at the resurrection of the righteous”!**

When Jesus says to help the poor, he’s calling us to not only help the

materially poor, but also, the spiritually poor, those who don't know Christ. He's also calling us to look for opportunities to evangelize, to invite people to the wedding feast of heaven.

I tried to do that at the Blood Drive in Port Hope I went to recently. The Red Cross woman asked me about my job. I shared that I was a pastor, and that basically my job is to tell others that I'm just one starving person, trying to tell other starving people, where... to find... the feast! That's my favorite definition of evangelization. She smiled, but didn't ask me what I meant, so I then asked her if she had been raised in a church, and we talked for a while. I hope our conversation is a part of her journey, AND my journey, to that feast!

This morning, Fr. Tony Smela from Flint picked me up from the CRIM race. On the way back to my car, he told me about a coffee house he helped to found, Dorothy's House of Coffee. It's a non-profit organization, but they take donations to cover costs. Their goal is to help the spiritually poor, by building community, and sharing the Gospel. The owner makes friends with visitors, and if the spirit leads him, he will invite them to bible studies or studies on the Catholic Faith held at the coffee house. He's inviting people to the wedding feast of heaven. **I look forward to seeing how God will repay the owner, and Fr. Tony, "at the resurrection of the righteous"!**

This week, have a discussion with one of your family members or friends. Discuss, how might our Lord be calling you to help the poor, whether the materially poor, or the spiritually poor. How might our Lord be calling you to tell other starving people where to find the feast?

Announce

First Saturday Mass: Coffee and homemade cinnamon rolls; Birthdays