

Question: Who has more fun at a wedding: the people sitting at the head table or the ones sitting in the back?

Here is a unique commentary of that question: “I was specially chosen to sit next to the lavatory at a wedding.

Why? Because it is water front seating.”

He continued his parody on his seating near the lavatory.

- **It is not like being up front where the supposed guests of honor are sitting in a scaffold while everyone is watching them eat peas with their fingers and knives.**
- **They want to hurry off the scaffold as soon as they can.**
- **How they can they be honored as the wedding party wearing all those clothes?**
 - **The bride has a dress that is often held together with pins and wearing shoes which ache her feet.**
 - **The groom has a tuxedo which is too tight at the neck and at the waste.**

Yes, I am afraid that wedding couples often get caught in games of social posturing and hypocrisy. We are often unconscious of our motivations. Now they are out in the open.

The famous Catholic novelist, Flannery O'Connor, was asked why does she has such grotesque characters In her books. ..so the blind (the blind is the readers) may see themselves in the characters! She calls it prophetic comic tradition.

(Pause)

This prophetic comic tradition is exactly what Jesus is using in today's gospel. He arrives at a dinner hosted by the Pharisees. From the very first moment he enters the meal there is much social posturing and hypocrisy going on.

There is a man who is lame who is at the meal. Such a man is considered unclean. Goes up to the man and curse him because that is why Jesus has come... to proclaim in word and deed that the kingdom has come. But it is the Sabbath day and the Pharisees say that he should not cure a person on the Sabbath.

Jesus challenges their hypocrisy. He asks, if they would have they mule or Stuck in the mud on the Sabbath, would they not free the animal. Of course they would. Then why not cure this man physically limited?

But Jesus is just warming up! He knows that promoting our egos is not the way the Kingdom of God works. The Pharisees are caught in games of social posturing and hypocrisy.

He tells them a story about coming to the wedding feast and where they should sit. He suggests that they not take the most honored seat for fear that if someone more famous comes in, they would be asked to sit at a lower position. Rather, take the lower seat and then when the person throwing the party comes in and sees you sitting at a the lower seat, he will ask you to move up!

Jesus is not simply letting them know how they might not be embarrassed by sitting at too high a seating at a banquet. He is telling is something critical, essential, core about the Kingdom of God.

He has come to announce that the Kingdom of God is present, here, right now, it is in our midst!

And his kingdom has NOTHING to do with sitting in high places and having honored places.

**For, in his kingdom, every one who exalts himself will be humbled,
but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”**

But Jesus has one more radical thing to say about whom should be seated at meals.

**He turns to the host who invited him and says,
“When you hold a lunch or a dinner,
do not invite your friends or your brothers
or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors,
in case they may invite you back and you have repayment.
Rather, when you hold a banquet,
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.”**

Yes, while we often spend our lives running away from the poor and crippled and lame and blind, Jesus says that if we are members of his kingdom that is exactly whom we should be inviting to our tables!

Let’s take an inventory about how our society acts,

Are not these some Cliffnotes on how to be happy and successful?

- **We are told to run away from the poor (living in Detroit).**
- **We encourage the rich to live in gated communities.**
- **We are warned to be careful of whom we invite into our homes for special celebrations;**
- **We are careful of whom is welcome in our church community, or in our pew, or at our table at coffee and donuts?**

Let me repeat, Jesus has come to announce that the Kingdom of God is present, here, right now, it is in our midst! His kingdom alone will bring us joy and peace; his reign will alone make friends out of enemies.

And his kingdom has NOTHING to do with sitting in high places and having seats of honor.

In his kingdom, everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

And so, the next time when you are at a wedding, check it out; see who is REALLY having a good time, the one at the head table or the one near the back. And while you are checking it out, make sure to invite the poor person who is all alone at the next table to join you for the meal.