

I have just returned from a 17 day journey, ten days at sea on Oceania's ship: Regatta

.On this particular cruise, there was open seating which reminds me of today's Gospel. It also reminds me of a must visit site in San Francisco. We made two visits to The Buena Vista Bar the "shrine" where Irish Coffee originated. When we went in the morning we were to fly out, the bar was jammed, filled with the jabbering of countless different languages. My cousin Rosemary and I were both on canes. As we worked our way through the crowd, two Twenty Something men observed us and hopped off the bar stool and offered us their seats. Chivalry and kindness is not dead. Two strangers helping out two other strangers, a simple act, but memorable--as was the Irish Coffee. Today's Gospel is all about taking seats at the Buena Vistas of Jesus times. [NOTE: A **Labor Day** Reflection follows this Homily.]

"For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and those who humble themselves shall be exalted." LK 14

Jesus uses the parable of the banquet to show that those who expect the number one seating, should step back like the two guys at the Buena Vista and offer their seats to others, and if they do so, they shall be rewarded.

But there is also a second theme to today's Gospel. Jesus tells the host that the next time he gives a banquet, he is not to invite the hoi poloi, "the beautiful people", the "in crowd."

Instead the invitation list of Jesus includes "the poor, the crippled, the lame the blind!"

Bread For the World is a U.S. Hunger Lobby which campaigns on behalf of just such people. And besides the crippled, the lame, and the blind, a good number of hungry people who are children.

Who shall speak for THEM amid the clamor of lobbies representing the special interests in Washington?

BREAD FOR THE WORLD does.

Recently, Bread for the World issued an annual "report card" on what degree of positive response it received from Congress on its appeals to aid the hungry. For your information here are some results: FOR ARIZONA AND NEBRASKA:

SENATE:ARIZONA

Flake: 20% McCain 20%

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Barber: 67% Franks: 33% Gosar: 17% Grijalva: 83% Kirkpatrick: 83% Pastor: 83% Salmon: 33% Schweikert:33% Sinema: 67%

SENATE: NEBRASKA:

Fischer: 20% Johanns: 20%

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Fortenberry: 17% Smith: 0% Terry: 17%

Hunger is a Gospel issue. Jesus made it so, and in today's Gospel he tells us who we as his followers should be concerned about feeding. To ignore the hungry is to ignore Jesus Christ. As Americans WE, YOU, and I ARE "the Government" since ours is a representative government. Of the food assistance that reaches the hungry poor, ONE IN TWENTY FOUR BAGS OF GROCERIES COME FROM CHARITABLE GROUPS LIKE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL.

The other TWENTY THREE BAGS COME FROM 'THE GOVERNMENT

David Brooks, a conservative columnist recently stated that he started out to write an "expose" of the abuses of the Food Stamp program and when he did his research he found very few abuses, so he abandoned the expose article.

Which brings us back to today's Gospel:

...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." LK 14:12-14

BREAKFAST QUESTION:

Can I find my Senator and Representative above? How much care did they have for the hungry?

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

What have I done lately for the hungry? or do I ever ask my Representative or Senator to care

for the hungry poor? And if I do not, who will?

You can visit Bread for the World at: www.bread.org

.LABOR DAY, 2013

This is a recent email comment from MY representative in the AZ legislature named Michelle Urgenti:

"can't wait to get back and bust the unions!"

Note: Some minimum wage fast food workers would like to be unionized.

WHERE DOES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH STAND ON LABOR UNIONS?

from: Busted Halo.com by: Father Joe Scott CSP:

"Over the last 200 years, the Catholic Church has consistently held a favorable attitude toward labor unions...all the way back to Cardinal Gibbons defense of them in 1887!

Pope Leo XIII agreed with Gibbons and in 1891 wrote a ground breaking encyclical *Rerum Novarum* that argued that a worker has a right to a wage sufficient to support the worker and his/her family.

The commitment of the Church to the worker was remphasized by Pope Pius XII and Pope John XXIII in *Mater Et Magistra*.

Pope John Paul II insisted that capital exists to serve labor! He wrote:

"There is a need for ever new movements of solidarity of the workers with the workers...The Church is firmly committed to this cause, for it considers it to be its mission, its service, a proof of its fidelity to Christ."