

## HOSPITALITY IN THE TIME OF COVID – TEXTS

### THE RULE OF BENEDICT (Chapter 53)

<sup>1</sup>All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, for he himself will say: *I was a stranger and you welcomed me* <sup>2</sup>Proper honor must be shown *to all, especially to those who share our faith* and to pilgrims. <sup>3</sup>Once a guest has been announced, the superior and the brothers are to meet him with all the courtesy of love. <sup>4</sup>First of all, they are to pray together and thus be united in peace, <sup>6</sup>All humility should be shown in addressing a guest on arrival or departure. <sup>7</sup>By a bow of the head or by a complete prostration of the body, Christ is to be adored because he is indeed welcomed in them. <sup>8</sup>After the guests have been received, they should be invited to pray; then the superior or an appointed brother will sit with them. <sup>9</sup>The divine law is read to the guest for his instruction, and after that every kindness is shown to him. <sup>12</sup>The abbot shall pour water on the hands of the guests, <sup>13</sup>and the abbot with the entire community shall wash their feet. <sup>14</sup>After the washing they will recite this verse: *God, we have received your mercy in the midst of your temple* <sup>15</sup>Great care and concern are to be shown in receiving poor people and pilgrims, because in them more particularly Christ is received; our very awe of the rich guarantees them special respect.

### GOOD SAMARITAN (Luke 10)

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

## **ABRAHAM** (Genesis 18)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.'

## **ZACCHAEUS** (Luke 19)

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'

## **MARTHA AND MARY** (Luke 10)

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

## HOSPITALITY IN THE TIME OF COVID – TASKS

1. Read slowly through the above texts. How do they speak to you about:
  - a. How to offer hospitality?
  - b. How to receive Christ as a guest?
  
2. Make a list of those you take for granted,  
those to whom you could offer ‘internal hospitality’.  
Pray a ‘Hail Mary’ for each of them by name.
  
3. Think back to those significant moments of hospitality which you have received –  
what made the difference?