

19 B

There is a legend told about Abraham in the near East. According to the legend, one day a very hungry man came to him and begged for food. Abraham rather hesitantly but sat him down for the meal. But when Abraham heard him say a pagan blessing over the food, he jumped up, and ordered the man from his table, and from his house. Almost immediately, God spoke to Abraham. 'Abraham, Abraham! I've been supplying that poor man with food every day for the past eighty years and you couldn't allow him eat in peace on one occasion.

Jesus had room at His table for all who sought him. For instance when he sought the company of Zachaeus, who was a tax collector for the despised Romans. The Jewish leaders were none too pleased with him because as they said 'Jesus had gone to stay at a 'sinners' house'.

The Mass, our love-fest with Jesus, is the place of forging closer friendships not just with Him but also with each other. Jesus doesn't want us to be at loggerheads with anyone when we come together for Mass. St Paul advises us today not to hold grudges or lose our temper or raise our voice to anyone, or be spiteful. Above all, let us put aside our prejudices and fears and not be rash in our judgements. That is not the language of the Mass.

The same applies on the global scene. There seems to be growing and worrying division in our world between nations and cultures often underpinned by dangerous ideologies. The United Nations itself seems anything but united these days. I would say that a secularist ideology has taken its toll on large segments of our Western culture and it's often at variance with the Christian faith. The church needs to face up to that and not go along with it. Unity in the Church and Truth go together.

Being one with Jesus in Holy Communion will help to heal division. Gathered round the one table implies seeing the face of Jesus in every man and woman whether he be Christian Muslim or pagan and loving them as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Even Christians are divided when it comes to the Eucharist. Some keep harping on about the 'saved versus the 'unsaved', whereas Jesus is there for everyone and is the saviour of all. As it says in last Sunday's gospel, 'he doesn't send anyone away hungry when they genuinely seek Him.

Jesus, the Bread of Life, is the answer to all personal, family and global divisions. When we receive Him worthily at Mass He will expand our horizons and help bring closer the day when everyone will find a place round His One Eucharistic table. Happy are those who are called to His Supper.