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Some foreign tourists one day visited the home of Beethoven. A young woman among them sat down at the great composer's piano and began to play his Moonlight Sonata. After she had finished, she turned to the old caretaker and said. 'I suppose a great many musicians visit this place every year'. 'Yes', he replied. 'Paderewski, the famous polish pianist, was here last year.' 'And did he play Beethoven's Piano', she asked. 'No' he said, 'he didn't consider himself worthy'

Jesus noticed how the Pharisees picked the places of honour at table. I suppose most of us could put up with sitting half way down the table but the lowest place – no thank you. And yet in today's Gospel Jesus asks us to do precisely that.

As part of our fallen human nature there is a tendency to get ourselves noticed for what we do or who we are. In contrast Jesus says that when we do some good deed for someone we are not to have it trumpeted before us to win the admiration of others. Jesus gave us eight beatitudes but flicking through a spiritual book recently I noticed where the Devil also has beatitudes. One of them runs like this: *Blessed are those who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked for what they do, I can use them.* That doesn't at all mean we take people for granted.

Generally speaking we don't like to be overlooked or passed over – it's a blow to our pride. But if it happens to us, it may just be a grace intended to make us more like Jesus who chose to be last of all and servant of all. What did St Therese say *'if we go through life without anyone noticing our accomplishments, so much the better'*. Our own St Vincent says; *'Ordinarily, God allows us sit in the lowest place to free us from some hidden pride'*.

It is interesting to note that after Jesus performed a miracle, he often beat a hasty retreat from the scene. He shunned the limelight because he didn't want celebrity status to go to his head thereby attracting the wrong type of follower. Remember they wanted to make him King after he miraculously fed the 5000 but he fled the scene.

At the wedding breakfast at Cana His mother seems to have put him on the spot by asking him to turn water into wine. Jesus was obviously embarrassed by being asked to perform a quick, on-the-spot miracle and told his mother Mary it wasn't the right moment, but deep down he knew he couldn't turn his mother down. Here we see Jesus being humble enough to forego his own wishes in favour of His mother's, while at the same time keeping very quiet about the miracle he'd just performed. The chief steward, the man in charge, had no idea where this superb wine came from because Jesus and His mother kept a low profile. So blowing our own trumpet or expecting others to do it for us was not the Lord's way. Neither should it be ours.

If we're quite content to sit with the meek and lowly at the lower end of life's table in this life, on the Day of reckoning we'll be asked to 'move up higher' – the lowly will be exalted.