

## **NOVEMBER 4 FATHER ROSHAN LOY D'SOUZA**

I come from a culture where people kept a log of every gift they ever received. Be it Birthdays, Baptisms, First communion, Confirmation and most importantly Wedding gifts. They would write down the date something was received, the occasion, and a description of the gift. This was done in order to track the value of gifts, to make sure that they gave a gift of comparable value to the giver. I am sure, most of us do.

And it is a different story, when u invited someone, and they fail to invite you in return. There begins a cold war. May be some of us are already into it.

According to Buddhist philosophy, “unfulfilled” expectations cause suffering.

Much of life involves the expectation of repayment for the things we do — I will do this for you, and you'll do something for me. Some relationships are built on doing things for each other, which is not necessarily bad.

The expectation of repayment can exist even though it may not be stated clearly. However, Jesus wants us to follow him into a more redemptive purpose in our relationships. He challenges us to bless, benefit, and befriend those who cannot repay us for our interest, concern, and kindness. Doing so leaves the rewards of our actions as the intrinsic blessing of helping someone else and a deep trust that what we do and how we do it matter to our God — and God promises to remember!

Jesus lived in a culture where those who had the means to do some good expected to get something in return for the good that they did. If they paid for something to be built, they would expect to be honoured in some way. Similarly, if they invited someone to a meal, they would expect to be invited to a meal in return.

This was the culture of giving in order to get. Jesus cuts across that culture in today's gospel reading.

He calls on his wealthy host to invite to his table people who have no means of returning his generosity. Jesus calls for a selfless form of generosity in place of a self-serving form of generosity. Jesus himself shows us what it means to give without expecting or getting any return. Jesus gave everything, his very life, and he received nothing in return from those for whom he gave his life.

He did receive something very precious from God; God raised him to new life. Jesus promises us that if we give to others without looking for a return from others, God will give us a return which far exceeds what we gave. In the words of the gospel reading, 'repayment will be made to you when the virtuous rise again'.

Today Jesus is inviting us to welcome the least among us. No matter where we live, we have the poor among us. The poor among us may not be financially destitute. The poor may be someone who has a beautiful home, a good salary, and seemingly a good life, yet they truly may be poor in all the ways that matter.

Are we willing to step out of our comfort zone and invite those who are poor to join us? Am I willing to open my door and my heart to them? If we are not ready to take this step, then today may we ask Jesus to open our hearts and to give us the grace and the courage to invite the least in. If we do this, we may find that the least are the ones who will give us the greatest gift.

Amen.