

## REFLECTION FOR SUNDAY 22 YEAR C 2016

This weekend at Our Lady of Grace Church, the sacrament of Penance (reconciliation-confession) was conducted at all masses. This enabled approximately 400 people to reconcile their lives with a loving and compassionate and merciful God, and reestablish a loving relationship with Jesus.

On December 15, 2015, Pope Francis inaugurated a year of mercy by opening the “Door of Mercy” 50 years after the opening of the Jubilee door in the year 2000.

This year of mercy has been a time of encountering the mercy of God and adopting a similar stance in our own lives.

Our Parish reconciliation weekend is a further example of this aspect of mercy.

Mercy is a virtue, another virtue is humility, and the scripture readings for this Sunday are about humility.

In the first reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus (or Sirac) we heard:-

“The greater you are, the more you should behave humbly and then you will find favour with the Lord”.

In the Gospel Jesus reminds us that those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

In life some have fame thrust upon them its something unavoidable for them because of what they do or who they are, there is nothing wrong here. But some go in search of the excesses of power, influence, money, possessions. This is not what Jesus expects of his disciples. Jesus expects us to use our time, talents and treasure for the good of others.

The message in the gospel today is how we stand before God that really matters, not whether we are numbered amongst the list of Australia's richest, or hold the record for the fastest time in a race, but are we a merciful person caring for the welfare of others, particularly those who are less fortunate than ourselves, and are we humble as we go about this.

Jesus commandment was( and still is) that we should love God, love our neighbor, and love ourselves. This is the message in this year of mercy, particularly in our readings for this Sunday, let us pray for the help of the Holy Spirit so that we can live up to it.