

## Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, May 29th 2024

Fr. Paulo Morlachi was an Italian Missionary who served in Hong Kong as a hospital chaplain for many decades. A motor accident in his youth almost crippled him and he walked with difficulty ever since. But that did not stop him from visiting many hospitals every day without fail, visiting patients and administering them the sacraments. He was old, limping, and was not fluent in the local language, but even years after his death, many people in Hong Kong remember him with affection for the comfort and peace he brought into their lives when they needed it most.

But today we live in a world where we want to stand out above others and prefer to be in places of honour and recognition. In the Gospel today, we have James and John requesting the Lord to consider them to the top position when the Lord establishes his Kingdom. Jesus gives them a beautiful catechesis: "whoever wants to be great, let him be your servant and whoever wants to be first, be the slave of all."

Fortunately, there are among us great people as Jesus asks us to be. They never appear in the media, nobody gives them recognition. They may not have academic qualifications nor do they possess much wealth, but they do have something that is worth more than material goods: kindness, tenderness and compassion for those in need. Men and women who walk through our streets, simple and ordinary people but who are found at the right moment when you need a word of encouragement, a friendly look, a happy smile, a favour ...

Good parents who take time, even if they come tired from the day's work, to listen to the thousand and one questions of their little children, who enjoy their games and discover the best of life with them. Tireless mothers who fill their homes with love and joy; women who are priceless, because they know how to give their children what they need most at every moment; Spouses who are maturing their love day by day, learning to give in, generously taking care of the happiness of the other, forgiving each other in the thousand little frictions of life.

These are the ones who make life more pleasant and the world more liveable. Jesus said of them that they are "great" because they live at the service of others and help them to live with hope and joy. In the desert of this world, where only rivalry and confrontation seem to grow, they are small oases where friendship, trust and mutual help sprout. They may never receive a tribute or even a word of thanks, but these men and women - "an uncountable crowd" as Revelation says - are great because they are human.