

German author Herman Hesse published the short novel *Die Morgenlandfahrt* in 1932; which appeared in English in 1956 as *The Journey to the East*.

It is from reading this book that author Robert K. Greenleaf developed his theory of “Servant Leadership.”

In today’s first reading, we hear the familiar story of Joseph from the Old Testament.

Joseph, the baby of the family, is shown undue favor by his father - drawing the jealous ire of his brothers who plot to kill him. As their plot unfolds, a twinge of conscience keeps them from murder, and (if it can be called mercy) they instead sell him into slavery. He ends up as a slave to the Pharaoh in Egypt. After a series of mishaps and imprisonment, Joseph proves himself to Pharaoh through his interpretation of dreams - and is given the highest office in the court of Egypt.

We join the story during the prophesied famine, and Joseph’s brothers have come seeking relief from Pharaoh’s resources.

Joseph has many options - ranging from being completely transparent and honest; to being totally vindictive and exacting revenge. He chooses a middle-path that scares his brothers ... in a sense flexing his political muscle to put the “fear of Joseph” into them.

In the Gospel, we hear the call of the Twelve Apostles.

Later on in this Gospel, Our Lord will tell the Twelve:

*whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant;
whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.
Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve
and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

Indeed, leadership in the Kingdom of God is far from what one expects in the Kingdom of this World.

As we receive Jesus Christ - body, blood, soul, and divinity - from this altar today; let us reflect on how we have lived out the call of Jesus Christ to each of us to lead by example in the Kingdom of God - here and now. Let us put aside anything that holds us back from the greatness Jesus calls us to live ... in His Kingdom here on earth.

So that as we go forth from this place, we may be examples of God’s merciful love poured out in Christ Jesus our Lord.