

## **LAST EQUALS FIRST!**

I believe that the deepest impression that Pope Francis will leave behind in his time as pope is his genuine *humility*. What reinforced this for me was a story that a priest told me when he was at a conference in the Vatican. This priest said that Pope Francis was one of the presenters at the conference and during the meal breaks he casually joined in line with others to self-serve his food from the buffet bar. This is definitely not usual practice for any Head of State to do!

We're living in a world where people who are *first* definitely get preferential treatment over others. For example, on an airline when a plane is ready to board, the passengers who are in First Class are permitted to board first of all, and then leave the aircraft before anyone else. Also, in many public workplaces and stadiums there is often no provision made for the bathroom needs of many physically handicapped people. Admittedly, this situation is changing for the better, but it's long overdue!

Jesus of Nazareth said, "*that the first will be last and the last first.*" (Matthew Chapter 19 verse 23). In saying this he does not want to reverse the current situation as this could then well lead to an inverse form of discrimination. I'm sure what he wants is that people seek to abolish all types of status over others and to treat others as genuine brothers and sisters. *Fr Martin R Maunsell*