



Do not neglect hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels, without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2

Reflection:

September 2025

Imagine this: you are relaxing at home when you hear a knock at the door. Instantly, you calculate who it could be, whether the house is presentable, and if you have time to deal with guests. These ordinary thoughts invite a deeper question: what is a Christian response, even when hospitality feels inconvenient? This response is evident in the lives of many faithful Jesus Youth, where welcoming loved ones and strangers, often at significant personal cost, becomes a real expression of missionary identity.

The Latin root of the word “hospitality,” *hospes*, which means both host and guest, points to the reciprocal nature of showing hospitality. By inviting or receiving guests or strangers into one’s home, as Scripture suggests, one may entertain angels without knowing it. In these encounters, both host and guest are mutually edified.

The word “hospital” shares this Latin root and reveals another dimension of Christian hospitality. The introduction of hospitals into society was largely the result of Christian efforts. The early Christians—and later, religious congregations—took in and cared for the sick, bringing the gospel message to life through their compassion. As a result, what was once reserved for the wealthy and privileged became available to all who needed care. If we view our homes and lives as “hospitals for sinners,” it becomes clear that the Lord invites us all to this mission. Whether someone requires physical or spiritual care, there are many who need refuge, care, and healing.

Let us consider both practical and spiritual steps needed for this gospel hospitality. The term “scruffy hospitality,” coined by an Anglican pastor, paints a vivid picture of what Christian hospitality can look like. While not denying the need to carefully prepare for and welcome others, the word *scruffy* places an emphasis on a willingness to share the beautiful chaos of everyday life. A well-loved home with children running around, a small student room, or a makeshift office space can all be perfect places to share a meal or conversation. Often, it is not perfect decor or elaborate food, but an open and welcoming table, warm smiles, and a relaxed atmosphere that are most inviting! Jesus himself was rarely bound by formalities; he broke bread on the mountain, the beach, and with tax collectors!

While logistical concerns may hinder us, more often, it is our own vulnerability that keeps us from welcoming others. By opening our homes, we may feel exposed to judgement or criticism about our families, lifestyles, or choices. We may feel our space, or ourselves, are unworthy or inadequate for the Lord’s work. At these times, we must invite Christ, the Divine Physician, to be our first guest. We can echo the faith of the centurion who said, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my servant shall be healed.” (Matthew 8:8). The Lord, seeing our faith, ministers to those we invite into our homes. He heals us through our faith, generosity, and hospitality. In this way, we may find that many of our guests—seeking to be seen, known, and loved—are actually angels in disguise, coming into our homes and receiving care beyond what we can give.

In response to our missionary calling, Christian hospitality becomes a powerful and effective means of witnessing the gospel. While some of us may carry the gospel to foreign lands, all of us are challenged to bring the gospel into our homes and daily lives. Hospitality thus becomes a gift to others, a gift from God, and a beautiful way to live out our faith.

Jilu Chengat

Jilu lives in Massachusetts, USA with her husband and four children. She has been in the movement since her teenage years and has served as a former national coordinator for JY US.

