

October 15, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 25:6-10a | Phil 4:12-14, 19-20 | Mt 22:1-14

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

I have about 75 first cousins (yes, really!), so I grew up accustomed to large gatherings. “Feasts” in our family were almost an everyday kind of thing. So you can imagine my initial reaction to today’s parable: Why would anyone refuse such a grand invitation? Who doesn’t love a feast? As we know, however, with parables, Jesus is giving us a message that is deeper than it first appears. Today he uses the image of a wedding feast to explain God’s abundant generosity, and the indifference or outright refusal this loving generosity is often met with. Yes, we enjoy sharing food with family and friends, but are we always gracious recipients of God’s love and bounty? Are we prepared, and properly disposed, to receive it? (Think of the graces we receive in the sacraments, especially confession.) The kingdom of heaven is the banquet to which we are all invited, and too often we can become busy with our material lives and not notice this ongoing invitation. Or we push it out of our minds, or gad about in the wrong garments (of sin, and not grace). Let us open our ears and our hearts to God’s loving invitation, strive to be holy people, and share this gift with those around us.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We learn from today’s readings that the kingdom of heaven can be likened to a sumptuous banquet. Isaiah, in the first reading, says it well, proclaiming, “The Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines.” Isaiah then moves from imagery of food to talk about how God will destroy death forever and wipe away all tears. In other words, God has saved his people, and offers us his constant presence and the gift of eternal life. But we must respond to God’s generosity in the proper manner so we are prepared to enter the kingdom when the time comes. Making our relationship with Jesus our number one priority will prepare us well to receive and respond to this invitation. From this we will see how our other priorities naturally change and how God always provides. As St. Paul says in his Letter to the Philippians: “My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

ACTION When you get dressed each morning this week, take a look at what you are wearing spiritually, as well as physically. What does the (spiritual) garment look like? Is it appropriate for a wedding feast? Pray the Act of Contrition (and go to confession if necessary), and then make a conscious effort to repair any faults in your spiritual garment: forgive someone or apologize to someone; pray specifically for someone you do not especially care for; spend time in Eucharistic Adoration.