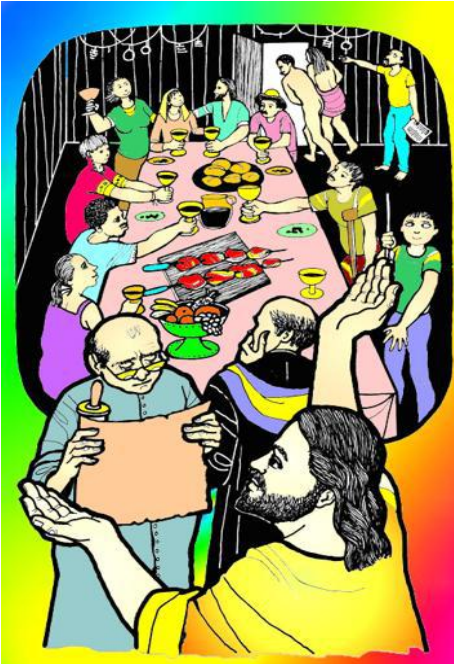


Lectionary Faith-Sharing Community  
**28TH ORDINARY SUNDAY**

Cycle A - October 11, 2020



**OPENING PRAYER**

Leader: *I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.*

All: **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He guides me along the right path for His name's sake. His goodness and mercy will accompany me all my life.**

Leader: *Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil.*

All: **The Lord is faithful to His promises and never abandons us. I fear nothing because He is always with me.**

Leader: *Let us invoke the presence of God:*

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.**

**O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit have instructed the hearts of the faithful grant that by the same Spirit we may truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations.**

**Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**First Reading** [Isaiah 25 (6-10)]

***On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.***

***On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever.***

***The Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face; the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken.***

***On that day it will be said: "Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the LORD for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"***

***For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain.***

**Commentary**

The book of the prophet Isaiah has a section (between chapters 24 and 27) that has been written in a very peculiar language, ("apocalyptic literature"); that's why some scholars call this section "Revelation of Isaiah". The small fragment proclaimed in this first reading belongs to this apocalyptic section and shows us a proclamation of hope in God's intervention in the not too distant future. This action from God will bring happiness: one that is not fleeting but rather a complete and permanent happiness that will be "for all peoples".

The author uses the image of an exquisite and abundant banquet, which will be repeated frequently in the New Testament as a reference to the messianic times. This wonderful future promised by God includes the elimination of suffering and pain, and in a very special way, the final victory over death, an enemy that man has not been able to overcome. The God of life does not permit that the men and women He has created have death as their final destination.

**Reflection**

- (1) What words or expressions suggest to you the idea of confidence and hope?
- (2) Can you remember any kind of help you've gotten in difficult times that restored in you the feeling of hope?
- (3) Discuss how the image of a banquet describes the fullness of life in the presence of God. How can a rich feast of delicious foods and drinks be a symbol of what is necessary for life and at the same time suggest something else? What is this "something else" that you can grasp from the text of this Reading?
- (4) Where is the victory over death, if humans continue dying and we are still subject to fatal diseases?

## Second Reading [Philippians 4 (12-14), (19-20)]

### **Brothers and sisters:**

***I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance.***

***In every circumstance and in all things I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need.***

***I can do all things in him who strengthens me.***

***Still, it was kind of you to share in my distress. My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.***

***To our God and Father, glory forever and ever. Amen.***

### **Commentary**

We have already said that the letter of Paul to the Philippians reveals a more intimate relationship between the apostle and the Christian community that is not found in other epistles. In the final part of this letter, the apostle thanks them for the help and the respect they have shown to him.

As a Christian missionary, Paul believes that it's acceptable to receive assistance and support from the communities he serves, although he has voluntarily renounced this right in order to make his testimony of the Gospel more legitimate. The apostle supports himself with his own work, but on a few occasions he had to appeal to the aid of the Philippians in moments of great need.

Paul did not confess his struggles to be displayed as a primary example to follow, but rather to reveal that everything has been made possible by the strength that he received from the Lord. The apostle Paul wants the Philippians to have the same trust in God, whose divine Providence has never abandoned his creatures. The text continues with Paul telling the Philippians that God will reward the generosity they have shown toward him, which stresses once again the unparalleled love of God. The text concludes with a solemn doxology.

(DOXOLOGY = sentence of praise to God, as in the "Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit...")

### **Reflection**

- (1) What type of aid have you received from other Christians in moments of urgency?
- (2) Can you remember a time when you had the opportunity to help someone? Did you provide them with assistance or not? Why?
- (3) How can we learn to be satisfied with less? Do we have more than what we need?
- (4) Paul knew that his strength and the support he was given came from God. Why then was he so moved by the support he received from the Philippians?
- (5) There is a beautiful prayer that says: "Lord, teach me to be generous, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will." Reflect upon this prayer. How does it speak to you, especially in relation to the second reading?
- (6) Is there a way we can do to give without counting the cost? How?

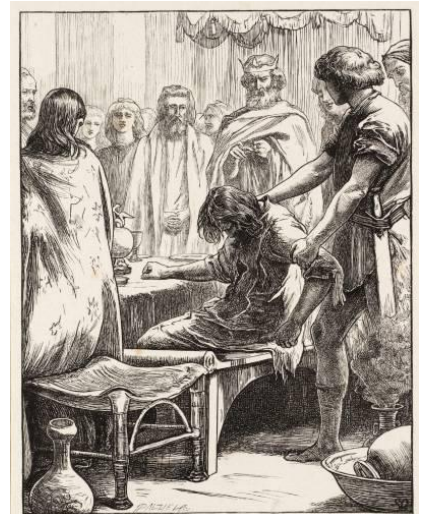
## Gospel [Matthew 22 (1-14)]

***Jesus again in reply spoke to the chief priests and elders of the people in parables, saying,***

***"The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come.***

***A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: "Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast."' Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them.***

***The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.***



**Then he said to his servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.'**  
**The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests.**  
**But when the king came in to meet the guests, he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment.**  
**The king said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?'**  
**But he was reduced to silence.**  
**Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'** *Many are invited, but few are chosen."*

### Commentary

The parable of the banquet takes its inspiration from the Old Testament, especially the text that the Church has chosen for today's First Reading. This parable is told directly after the story of the murderous tenants of the vineyard, which we read after the parable of the two sons. We notice in all of them a similar message: the infidelity of the people who have originally been chosen by God, but have not responded as He desired, up to the point of rejecting His very own Son.

The second part of the parable (the party dress) is not easy to understand without knowing some customs of the times: guests of a banquet were offered the appropriate clothing, and obviously this man rejected or ignored the gift. By including this section of the parable, the evangelist stresses the need for coherence between faith and life. It is not enough to just accept the Gospel; you must respond appropriately. In other words, you have to live by the Gospel. Other Bible passages (Revelation 19:8) share with us more about the symbolic relationship between the party dress and good works.



### Reflection

- (1) With which character do you identify: the king, a guest who apologized, a servant, one of those collected from the streets, or a neutral observer?
- (2) Read Luke 14 (16-24) and compare the two texts.
- (3) Read Revelation 19 (8). Discuss how it relates to the Gospel's discussion of wedding garments.
- (4) Read Matthew 7 (21-27) and discuss. Does it clarify or bring anything to light within the Gospel reading?
- (5) From this parable, what is the most difficult part to fulfill? What is most challenging?
- (6) What is your personal image of the kingdom of heaven? Share with the group.

### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees may propose their own petitions to God)

All: **In the same way in which we have been blessed by your presence as we met, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us ✝ in the name of the Father and of the Son .....**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*