

COME TO THE FEAST



Sunday's first reading, Isaiah describes what celebration with God will look like: "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."

Jesus reminds us that there are obligations to joining the celebration: "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.'"

Every Sunday we are invited to the feasts described by Isaiah and Jesus: The Eucharist. Let us consider the magnitude, and the obligations of this invitation.

As we approach this feast, **"we leave our place, we process (from sin, from disunity, prejudice, bigotry, isms, all that weights us down) and come forward to Christ Jesus right now! Whatever we walked away from we walk towards cleansing and forgiveness."** *Cardinal Ratzinger, Eucharist, Communion and Solidarity*

Everyone is invited to the Eucharist. At this feast, **the Body and Blood are to be shared among everyone, not hoarded by only a few.** In this way, our Eucharistic celebration recalls the multiplication of the loaves (Jn 6), in which five loaves and two fish feed all when shared by the entire community.

"Celebrating the Eucharist ... transforms us ... to bring love and hope to the person living in poverty, the stranger, the unborn—all those whose dignity is threatened. USCCB

The Eucharist is a sign of our "incomparable dignity" as human persons. This dignity, given to all equally, regardless of their social or economic status or where they come from, causes us to recognize "what value each person, our brother or sister, has in God's eyes, if Christ offers Himself equally to each one... **If our Eucharistic worship is authentic, it must make us grow in awareness of the dignity of each person.**" *John Paul II, Dominicae Cenaee #6*

Whoever recognizes the Lord in the tabernacle, recognizes him in the suffering and the needy; they are among those to whom the world's judge will say: "I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me" (Mt 25:35). *Cardinal Ratzinger, Eucharist, Communion and Solidarity*

The Eucharist calls us to justice, to disregard the distinction between rich and poor, the haves and the have-nots, both around the Eucharist table itself and afterwards outside of the church. *Ronald Rolheiser*

We cannot be in Communion with the Body on the table (the altar) and not be in communion with the body (assembly) at the table. We cannot love God who we cannot see, and hate our brothers and sisters who we do see.

And in the Eucharist the Lord makes us walk on his road, that of service, of sharing, of giving; and if it is shared, that little we have, that little we are, becomes riches, for the power of God — which is the power of love — comes down into our poverty to transform it. *Pope Francis*

As we begin 40 Days for Life and approach Oregon's elections, the holidays, and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development Weekend, let us reflect on fulfilling our obligations to the one who invited us to this Christian feast.

(Readings for 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time)



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