

A reading from the Book of Revelations

I, John, heard what sounded like the loud voice

of a great multitude in heaven, saying:

“Alleluia!

Salvation, glory, and might belong to our God.”

A voice coming from the throne said:

“Praise our God, all you his servants,

and you who revere him, small and great.”

Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude

or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder,

as they said:

“Alleluia!

The Lord has established his reign,

our God, the almighty.

Let us rejoice and be glad

and give him glory.

For the wedding day of the Lamb has come,

his bride has made herself ready.

She was allowed to wear

a bright, clean linen garment.”

(The linen represents the righteous deeds of the holy ones.)

Then the angel said to me,

“Write this:

Blessed are those who have been called

to the wedding feast of the Lamb.”

The Word of the Lord. *R. Thanks be to God*

Commentary

The book of Revelations is also referred to as apocalypse, which was an ancient writing genre. An apocalypse was when an author would reveal (hence the title Revelations) visions about the future or heaven. This passage is a glimpse into a heavenly wedding feast. Christ is the central figure, and his bride is the entire church, the people of God. The great multitude is the throngs of angels and saints. Reference is made to a bright, clean garment. At a wedding, one would think of the bride's dress. Here, it is the white garment of the saints, and the baptismal garment of those born into the life of Christ through the waters of baptism.

A wedding is referenced twice, yet it is a mystical image of Christ and the Church. It tells us something about the nature of the sacrament of marriage. Christian sacramental marriage intends to show the world the kind of unity that God has with his people. The overabundance of joy in heaven at the union of the faithful with Christ is similar to the joy of a Christian husband and wife.

This reading is mystical in nature and might not easily appeal to the wedding couple and their gathered friends. It could appeal to those who have studied in depth the church's teachings, who have a common love for the Eucharist (a symbol of the banquet feast) and who look forward to a life together on earth and in heaven.