

Homily
20th Thursday of Ordinary Time I 2001
St. Rose of Lima
Judges 11:29-39, Psalm 40:5, 7-10, Matthew 22:1-14

Today we remember St. Rose of Lima, who gave up all to listen and serve.

The Judges story of Jephthah is so brutal that it's hard to sort out what's going on. Even though Jephthah was chosen by God to lead Israel in the wars for homeland, he proves that all of God's chosen have not necessarily been open-eared.

Why make the vow at all? Wasn't the God of the Red Sea providing a homeland for his people? Did Jephthah think he could make deals with God: "God if you will ... I will?" I've done that.....why?!!

The only good guy in this story is his daughter. She gave up all. She responded with openness to what she believed to be honor-bound...to be God-bound.

In Matthew's parable, Jesus continues to explore the plight of those who don't listen to God, who don't respond to his invitation. The king destroyed those that ignored him and offered a place to any stranger who'd respond. Those who did were treated to a wonderful banquet.

But what about the improperly dressed guest? Is this an example of a church dress-code? I hope not. Here at St Tom's it can get pretty casual in attire.

For early Christians, "putting on the garment" is highly symbolic. It means to live the Christian life of charity and mercy.

First there's the invitation.

Then we show up.

But then comes our response to BE JESUS for our brothers and sisters. This "BE" is an action verb. Does "WE DO JESUS" help with that idea?

Unlike the tossed out "improperly dressed" guest, are we prepared to do more than just show up?

Our response to our psalm today is: "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will."