

Homily notes:

11th October 2020 - 28th Sunday in OT Year A 2020

We've moved on from Vineyards now to two parables linked together. The wedding feast and the wedding garment. The mood is still argumentative as Jesus continues his confrontation with the Jewish leaders. God's invitation to salvation is met with apathy from some and angry rejection from others. We could say no change there then 20 centuries on.

The wedding is a very appropriate image of God's invitation for we are called to love God, to be united with him in mind and heart, and to live a life on earth which anticipates heaven. The wedding also represents the marriage of God with humanity which took place when Jesus took on our human flesh, and from his pierced side on the cross flowed the sacraments to feed and nourish his bride, the Church, whose members are sent out to the crossroads, to the streets, to invite everybody to the feast.

Isaiah in the 1st Reading promised a banquet of joy and life on God's mountain. It is a prayer of thanksgiving for deliverance, expressing the hopes and longings of all humanity, the realisation of the kingship of God. The Mass, is Christ's banquet here on earth; 'Blessed are those called to the supper/banquet of the Lamb. Ultimate communion with Christ takes place in heaven with the unending union of God and his saints. .

Although we are not the target audience, that does not mean we can breathe a sigh of relief and ignore the parable. As the believing people of our day, there is still a message for us to take to heart. We can resonate with those who made the excuses, we can all be full of excuses and certainly know plenty who are.

The key to the passage is the wedding garment which we need to understand. It is not a matter of having no time to go home and change- the meaning is symbolic of the deeds outlined by Matthew that we recall and renew each Lent: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, works of mercy. It is the white garment received in baptism which we are meant to live up to a Christ-like way of life, empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a life of grace.

The one without the garment is the one who is passively going to the feast, and therefore rejects the king as much as those who refused to come.

Those of us who are living symbols of the kingdom of God today are not invited to proclaim the good news passively, but to do so with conviction and passion. Christians are invited to enjoy the feast, to participate fully in it and to radiate that joy to others, for our faith is about life and joy: that is God's purpose for us all.