



LIVING THE GOSPEL

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
11th October, 2026

Theme: "Go to the main crossroads and invite everyone you can find to come to the wedding."

Gathering Prayer

Facilitator: May your grace, O Lord, we pray, at all times go before us and follow after and make us always determined to carry out good works. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: Matthew 22: 1-14

¹Jesus began to speak to them in them in parable once again, ² 'The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. ³ He sent servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. ⁴ Next he sent some more servants with the words. "Tell those who have been invited: Look, my banquet is all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding." ⁵ But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ and the rest seize his servants, maltreated them and killed them. ⁷ The king was furious. He dispatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their towns. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, ⁹ go to the main crossroads and invite everyone you can find to come to the wedding." ¹⁰ So these servants went out onto the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, ¹² and said to him, "How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?" And the man was silent. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." ¹⁴ For many are invited but not all are chosen.'

Gospel Focus

As we approach the end of the liturgical year end and the end of Matthew's Gospel, the readings become weightier and more eschatological. As with last week's gospel reading, this text is highly allegorical, unlike the simpler parables we encountered earlier in Matthew. Initially, there are two different responses to the king's invitation- apathy and hostility. For either reasons, those whom God chosen to attend refused the offer. Even

still, the king desired to hold a feast, and orders his servants to invite whomever they could find, "bad and good alike." God desires his eschatological banquet to be as well-attended as possible. All are invited; none are excluded. Even if we accept the initial invitation, if we do not enter with a "wedding garment"—a prepared heart—we will not be permitted to stay at the feast. With the unfortunate ending of the long form of this gospel reading, it is important to emphasize the generosity of God's offer. Only by our own choices are we left without, but that freedom makes it all the more important to respond appropriately.

Gospel Reflection

While beautiful embossed paper invitations sent by "snail mail" are still used for special occasions, a much easier and formal "e-vite," sent electronically to our email inboxes has become increasingly common for more informal occasions.

In today's gospel, the host of the great banquet seems to have used the ancient equivalents of both of these as he prepared for his son's wedding. When those who received formal invitations are summoned to the feast, they refuse to come, even after two attempts by the servants. The king then instructs the servants to go out to the streets and invite everyone they find. They do so, gathering in the "bad and good alike," and the banquet hall is filled.

Matthew's version of the parable doesn't highlight the status divisions between the first and the last invited. Instead, Matthew focuses on the generous extravagance of the host and the expected responses.

This is the third in a series of three parables directed at the religious leaders, who would be expected to be the first to receive and respond affirmatively to God's invitation through Jesus. But these are not the ones who fill the banquet hall. Jesus, Wisdom incarnate, calls out to all "from the heights out over the city," extending an e-vite to any who are willing to "advance in the way of understanding" (Prov 9:3, 6)

But there is a catch. One must come properly attired. In the Pauline letters, we find frequent use of the metaphor of putting on clothing to signify the way of life one embraces. The Colossians are exhorted, "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness and humility, gentleness and patience" (Col 3:12; see also Rom 13:14; Gal 3:27). Likewise, Matthew would have all the guests clothe themselves with good deeds and faithfulness, ever ready for the banquet. More is needed than just showing up.

The Matthean version of this parable veers away from parabolic form, as it becomes a highly allegorized sketched of salvation history. While the extravagant generosity of the king in opening the banquet hall to all is a most apt depiction of God's invitation through Jesus, the vicious retaliation against those who killed the king's servants and the burning of the city are not depicting God's doings: they are illusions to the killing of servants like John the Baptist by Herod, and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE by the Romans.

As in other Matthean parable, where unresponsive characters are "driven out into the outer darkness, where there will be a wailing and grinding of teeth" (Matt 8:12; cf. 13:42; 24:51; 25:30), there is a warning that refusal of the divine invitation has dire consequences' God does not inflict fiery punishments, but those who ignore God's invitation and do not allow themselves to be clothed in the garment of Jesus' ways of love, forgiveness, inclusivity, and nonviolent action for justice, choose for themselves a place at the table of retaliatory violence and destruction.

Old/New Testament and CCC links

First Reading — Isaiah 25:6-10

⁶ On this mountain, for all peoples, Yahweh Sabaoth is preparing a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of succulent food, of well-strained wines. ⁷ On this mountain, he has destroyed the veil which used to veil all peoples, the pall enveloping all nations; ⁸ he has destroyed death for ever. Lord Yahweh has wiped away the tears from every cheek; he has taken his people's shame away everywhere on earth, for Yahweh has spoken.

⁹ And on that day, it will be said, 'Look, this is our God, in him we put our hope that he should save us, this is Yahweh, we put our hope in him. Let us exult him and rejoice since he has saved us.' ¹⁰ For Yahweh's hand will rest on this mountain, and Moab will be trodden into dung-heap.

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

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

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green is the pasture where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit (**R**)

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. (**R**)

You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. (**R**)

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. (**R**)

Second Reading — Philippians 4: 12-14, 19-20

¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do everything through him who gives me strength. ¹⁴ Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Catechism of The Catholic Church

546. Jesus' invitation to enter his kingdom comes in the form of *parables*, a characteristic feature of his teaching.(Cf. Mk 4:33-34) Through his parables he invites people to the feast of the kingdom, but he also asks for a radical choice: to gain the kingdom, one must give everything.(Cf. Mt 13:44-45; 22:1-14) Words are not enough, deeds are required.(Cf. Mt 21:28-32) The parables are like mirrors for man: will he be hard soil or good earth for the word?(Cf. Mt 13:3-9) What use has he made of the talents he has received?(Cf. Mt 25:14-30) Jesus and the presence of the kingdom in this world are secretly

at the heart of the parables. One must enter the kingdom, that is, become a disciple of Christ, in order to "know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven".(Mt 13:11) For those who stay "outside", everything remains enigmatic.(Mk 4:11; cf. Mt 13:10-15)

796. The unity of Christ and the Church, head and members of one Body, also implies the distinction of the two within a personal relationship. This aspect is often expressed by the image of bridegroom and bride. The theme of Christ as Bridegroom of the Church was prepared for by the prophets and announced by John the Baptist.(Jn 3:29) The Lord referred to himself as the "bridegroom."(Mk 2:19) The Apostle speaks of the whole Church and of each of the faithful, members of his Body, as a bride "betrothed" to Christ the Lord so as to become but one spirit with him.(Cf. Mt 22:1-14; 25:1-13; 1 Cor 6:15-17; 2 Cor 11:2) The Church is the spotless bride of the spotless Lamb.(Cf. Rev 22:17; Eph 1:4. 5:27) "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her."(Eph 5:25-26) He has joined her with himself in an everlasting covenant and never stops caring for her as for his own body(Cf. Eph 5:29)

This is the whole Christ, head and body, one formed from many . . . whether the head or members speak, it is Christ who speaks. He speaks in his role as the head (*ex persona capitis*) and in his role as body (*ex persona corporis*). What does this mean? "The two will become one flesh. This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the Church."(Eph 5:31-32) And the Lord himself says in the Gospel: "So they are no longer two, but one flesh."(Mt 19:6) They are, in fact, two different persons, yet they are one in the conjugal union, . . . *as head, he calls himself the bridegroom, as body, he calls himself "bride."*(St. Augustine, En. in Ps. 74:4: PL 36, 948-949)

1036. The affirmations of Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church on the subject of hell are a call to the responsibility incumbent upon man to make use of his freedom in view of his eternal destiny. They are at the same time an urgent call to conversion: "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few."(Mt 7:13-14)

Since we know neither the day nor the hour, we should follow the advice of the Lord and watch constantly so that, when the single course of our earthly life is completed, we may merit to enter with him into the marriage feast and be numbered among the blessed, and not, like the wicked and slothful servants, be ordered to depart into the eternal fire, into the outer darkness where "men will weep and gnash their teeth."(LG 48 # 3; Mt 22:13; cf. Heb 9:27; Mt 25:13, 26, 30, 31 46)

Sharing and Discussion

1. We all know intellectually that God's call is supreme, yet we still often prioritize everyday demands over Him. Looking beneath the surface of your busy schedule, what underlying fears, desires, or beliefs drive you to put other things ahead of the "wedding feast"?
2. The parable closes with the chilling phrase: "For many are invited, but few are chosen." How do you wrestle with the tension between a wide-open, universal invitation and the sobering reality of inner transformation and accountability?
3. The king kept sending servants out with a persistent, wide-open invitation even after being rejected. How long should we persist when sharing our faith with others, and what helps you stay patient in the face of indifference or resistance rather than giving up?

Closing Prayer

Facilitator: Loving God, you speak to us in daily events of our lives. Be with us as we work to build up your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven and hear these prayers we raise today. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Facilitator: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen

Looking to deepen your faith and connect with fellow parishioners? Join us for our "Living the Gospel" Bible study and sharing session at the parish. Together, we will reflect on God's Word, grow in faith, and journey together in fellowship.

Every Saturday

Time: 9.30 – 11.00 am

Venue: Level 3, Rm 03-06

All are welcome! For more information, please contact;

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Reflection material available on Parish Website under – (Weekly Bible Sharing - Living the Gospel)

References for the Living the Gospel Reflection:

- 1) Gospel notes taken from the Navarre Bible
- 2) Gospel reflection and Living Liturgy are taken from "Living Liturgy for Sunday and Solemnities" by Order of St Benedict. Published by Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.
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