

Homily. 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. A. 14/15 October 2023.

Once again Jesus tells a challenging parable to the Jerusalem Temple Priests and leaders of the people. Like all parables it's a simple story about a King inviting his people to come and share in a wedding feast that he's throwing for his son. The King's servants go out and deliver the invitations, but they are rejected and ignored. Not one to give up easily the King sends more servants on the same mission saying, Come to the feast. Nobody invited is interested because they are far too interested in themselves, and this time some of the servants cop it for their troubles. When the King hears of this he gives up on those invited as unworthy to attend. Their town is destroyed and all that so concerned them is lost.

But, what to do now about the wedding? The King chooses a new course of action inviting any and everyone who will to come to share in the feast. The insignificant people, good and bad alike, accept this invitation and fill up the wedding hall. The message is clear; If we who are invited time and time again don't get onboard with what God is doing then there's a price to be paid, but God isn't going to be left with an empty hall. No, the invitation will be offered to everyone, for God's kindness and generosity is much wider and deeper than our selfish hearts and self interested minds.

The wedding feast is about the Kingdom of God drawn from the rich image Isaiah painted for us in the 1st reading, but here with twist. Isaiah told of a great feast on God's holy mountain at the end of time, the last days. Jesus is saying that the last days have begun, that now is the time of God's invitation and that the Kingdom reign of God is already upon us.

This urgency a world of difference, for the message delivered to us is something happening today, not something delayed for another time. God's invitation calls us to wake up and realise that we are already making steps towards the wedding hall and need to get dressed accordingly. It urges us to make sure that we are worthy of this invitation and get started by acting in ways that are just, honest, kind and loving.

Today, you and I see a world around where there is injustice and conflict, so what are we doing to make even a smallest difference to this lamentable state of affairs? We live in a society where many have their voices silenced by fear and by those people who manipulate power to serve themselves, so where are our opportunities to listen, hear and help our brothers and sisters be heard? Clutching our invitation from the King to his son's wedding, as we make our way to the the Lord of Hosts rich banquet where the veil of sadness and death is banished, what are we doing today to lift the pall of shame and death from those around us?

We are the people of the feast, God's invited people. That's how we now have to think of ourselves. We know that our Eucharist is the foretaste, an entree to if you will, as well as the promise of the wedding banquet that is coming, and happening sooner than we might think. Anything that we can say and everything that we can possibly do to share this joyful, hopeful news matters very much, not just for us but also for those we meet and greet each day. In these people, good and bad alike, we now recognise other sheep of the Good Shepherd's flock who in their hearts, like us, really want to live in the house of the Lord's plenty all the days our lives.