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Year A 28TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION AVAILABLE ALSO

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Isaiah 25:6-10

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 22(23)

Second Reading:

Philippians 4:12-14,19-20

Gospel:

Matthew 22:1-14

*'For many are called,
but few are chosen.'*



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Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) on the readings for children.

Pray

In the Gospel today we hear Jesus presenting the Kingdom of God as a wedding feast, but with some harsh truths.

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Do you find this scripture piece uncomfortable? It's not the easiest presentation of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like, but read it again and see what is on offer and how people respond.
- It might seem harsh that someone is thrown out for not wearing the right clothes - but the parable means much more than a dress code: how are we responding to God's invitation? Are we willing to put on Christ and take off anything that is not of him? Are we willing to repent, to forgive, to love as He does?

Talk

In today's readings we hear Jesus tell a dramatic parable about the Kingdom of Heaven - and it's not the simplest one!

- Are there different outfits expected for different occasions? What would you wear for a wedding? For a soccer match? For a Barbecue? For visiting a friend's house? For visiting the President?
- The more important the occasion is, the more attention we pay to what we wear. Jesus is not talking about clothes in this parable, but more about our actions and attitudes to building up God's Kingdom. What kind of actions should we "put on" as his disciples?

Family Challenge!

Each day this week, make a decision to "put on" a certain way of being Christian (we should do this everyday, but it can help to really focus our attention too!) Use the colouring page in "Let's Dive In" to guide you, and chat about how you got on as a family that day!

DO WE ACCEPT THE INVITE?

Immediately after criticizing the religious leaders through the parable of the tenants in last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus proceeded to tell another parable, again directed at the religious leaders. We hear this parable in today's Gospel.

In the parable of the wedding feast, Jesus offers an image of the kingdom of heaven using the symbol of a wedding banquet. In today's first reading from the prophet Isaiah and in today's psalm, the Lord's goodness is evident in the symbol of a feast of good food and wine. Jesus' listeners would have been familiar with the image of a wedding feast as a symbol for God's salvation. They would consider themselves to be the invited guests. Keeping this in mind helps us to understand the critique Jesus makes with this parable. The context for this parable is the growing tension between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem. This has been the case for the past two Sundays and will continue to be true for the next several weeks.

The parable Jesus tells is straightforward. The king dispatches his servants to invite the guests to the wedding feast that he is planning for his son. The listeners would have been surprised to learn that the first guests refused the invitation. Who would refuse the king's invitation? A second dispatch of servants follows. Again to the listeners' great surprise, some guests ignore the invitation. Some of the invited guests even go so far as to mistreat and kill the servants. The king invokes his retribution against these murderers by destroying them and burning their city.

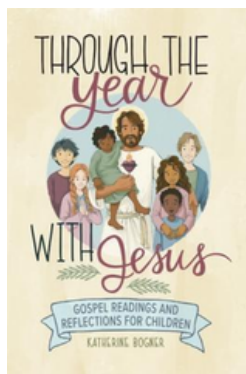
We might stop here for a moment. Why would some guests kill the servants sent to invite them to the king's wedding feast? It might be possible that the king was a tyrant, evidenced by the destruction of the city of those who refused his invitation. But if we follow this idea, then the allegory seems to be about something other than the kingdom of heaven. It is more likely that the destruction of the city would have been a powerful image corresponding to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, which would have been an important event for Matthew's audience.

With the invited guests now deemed unworthy to attend the king's wedding feast, the servants are sent to invite whomever they can find. The guests arrive, but it appears that accepting the king's invitation brings certain obligations. The guest who failed to dress in the appropriate wedding attire is cast out of the feast. We are reminded that while many are invited to the kingdom of heaven, not all are able to meet its requirements. God invites us to his feast, giving us his salvation. Yet he asks us to repent for our sins.

Jesus' message in the parable cautions against exclusive beliefs about the kingdom of heaven. The parable also teaches about humility. Those who assume that they are the invited guests may find that they have refused the invitation, and so others are invited in their place. To accept the invitation is also to accept its obligations. God wants our full conversion in complete acceptance of his mercy.

taken from **Loyola Press Sunday Connection**

CHECK IT OUT: THROUGH THE YEAR WITH JESUS: GOSPEL READINGS AND REFLECTIONS FOR CHILDREN



In Through the Year with Jesus: Gospel Readings and Reflections for Children, catechist and popular blogger Katherine Bogner reveals the rich mystery of the seasons we celebrate in the Church. With Gospel readings for each week of the liturgical year, along with tools for reflection, discussion, and prayer, Through the Year with Jesus offers endless opportunities for discovering who Jesus is and better understanding Catholic teaching about his life and mission. Available at Veritas Bookstores.



MADE FOR MORE!

"Anything worth doing is worth doing well": Sound familiar? Sound easy? We can all look for the easy option at times - staying in our comfort zones, wanting things handed to us - who wouldn't want that? There's a lot going on in this parable: the first part is easier to understand. God invites many into His Kingdom, the wedding feast of His Son (Jesus) but many refused the invitation - just like many refused to listen to the prophets in the Old Testament (the servants in the parable). So God goes beyond the Jews, the Chosen People, and others are invited into the feast, the Kingdom of Heaven. For the Elders and Pharisees at the time of Jesus this would have been shocking, but it's a concept we're more familiar with these days. Maybe too familiar... that's why the next part can still jar with us. One guest comes, not properly dressed and is thrown out. Would God really kick someone out of his kingdom for not being properly dressed? That sounds ridiculous, and it's not actually what's going on here. It's a reminder to us that all are invited, but we need to actively decide for Christ. We need to strive to reach our Christian potential with promptness and preparedness and not settle for a life of mediocrity. We were made for more!

This week:

Take some time this week to look at any area where you're struggling with being prompt and prepared. How is this impacting your life? How could it be better? Are you prompt and prepared when it comes to practicing your faith, or are you like the wedding guest who just turned up with no commitment or genuine effort on your behalf especially in matters of faith?



Fr Mike Schmitz: "How to Be Excellent"



Matthew West: The Motions

To the Heights Youth Resource also available



Family Prayer

God, open our hearts to hearing your Word and give us the grace to put it into action in our lives. Amen

EVENTS

The Chosen TV Series: Beginning Tues 10th Oct (8pm) on zoom or Wed 11th Oct (2.30pm) in person in St John's Pastoral Centre, Waterford. For more info contact Sr. Kathryn 087 404 2784 or waterford@ascjus.org

Café Theology: Wed 18th October, Granville Hotel, Waterford @ 7pm. Fr Chris Hayden: Catholic Vision of Sexuality, author of "A Better Vision".

Prayer Vigil for Vocations: led by the Sisters of Mary Morning Star. 22nd October at 3pm at the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity. Blessing with relic of St John Paul II.

Youth2000 Munster Retreat: Catholic Youth Retreat - faith, fun and fellowship for those aged 16 - 35 years in Middleton Co. Cork, 20 - 22 October. Donation only. For more details and information on how to book go to www.youth2000.ie

Holy Family Mission All Saints Party: Monday 30th October, Holy Family Mission, Glencomeragh House. Prayer, Talk, Mass, Music, Fun and Games for all the Family! 11am - 2pm. Bring a packed lunch. For more info email info@holymission.ie

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