

28th Sunday
10/15/2023

THE INTERSECTION

Weddings are a time of great joy and this parable while both strange and frightening, has also been called an invitation to joy. One author describes salvation as an intersection between God's grace and our human response. God's salvation is a gift we cannot earn. It requires a response on our part to God who first loved us. Those who are called to the banquet are already invited but now when it's time to go, they refuse.

God's love is like a banquet. It's a free gift but what we do is still very important. In the early Church, St. Gregory of Nyssa said that in one sense, we become our own parents by the decisions we make because our decisions determine who we become. It's been said that God's grace is not only a gift but a responsibility. Like a marriage proposal, it must be accepted or rejected. We cannot earn our salvation but we can lose it. Faith challenges us to new life, to lead better lives, to allow Christ to make a difference.

We can reject it outright or be indifferent. The fact that we're here today hopefully indicates we haven't rejected that gift. But we can take it for granted and forget what God has done for us; we can fall into minimalism—what's the bare requirement I have to do; or mediocrity—I just want to fly below the radar and get by. This Gospel calls us to take the call to the Kingdom seriously; to take our spiritual destiny seriously. Sometimes you may here someone say, "God loves me just the way I am." And while that's true, it's also true that God loves you too much to leave you that way.

God's invitation is also a call to conversion. God's mercy doesn't mean that we can go out and do whatever but rather that God has a better plan for our lives, a better road for us to walk, something even joyful. This all reminds us to open our hearts to more deeply receive God's love, in prayer, in the sacraments, through God's word and in being faithful to our duties in life.

What is the wedding garment that the one guest isn't wearing? Perhaps it represents our lifestyle or the garment of baptism or perhaps it's our own actions and

good works. The lack of a wedding garment can be seen as unconverted life, a life untouched, unresponsive and unchanged by God's love.

Isaiah uses the image of a holy mountain where a feast is prepared. In the Eucharist, we too draw near to a holy mountain. A mountain where we're not only fed by God but with God. Here in the person of Jesus, God feeds us with himself. Here, the saving action the saving action of Jesus' death and resurrection is made present to us. Here, Jesus gifts himself to us under the form of bread and wine. Here, we share in the victory of Jesus' death and resurrection. In the Eucharist, we continue to put on the Lord Jesus. From this holy mountain hope flows into our lives.

God offers us an invitation to share in the eternal love of Father, Son & Holy Spirit. It's an invitation to joy, to eternal joy. We can never earn this but it requires a response we can reject, be indifferent to or accept. This requires a decision that God will not make for us. May we turn away from minimalism and mediocrity and with lives of intentional faith, may we respond in love knowing that the response we make, will make the difference. May the intersection of God's call and our response, lead us to the joy of the heavenly wedding feast.