

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A (15 October 2017)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

Three of the four scripture passages for this Sunday center on the image of God as a host who provides bountiful nourishment and good cheer for all. Like the vineyard image of last Sunday, the banquet image threads its way through both Hebrew and Christian scriptures. In exultant poetry Isaiah describes a joyous and lavish thanksgiving feast provided by God. It is also a thanksgiving to God for delivering the Israelites from enemies (probably Assyria or Babylon). The "hand of the Lord," God's power, is with them. And not only are the Israelites invited; all nations are given the hope that despair, sadness, pain, shame, and guilt will be no more. God promises to undo the curse of death imposed on Adam and Eve. Psalm 23 echos Isaiah. God is once again a host who feeds, anoints, protects and gives hope.

In our second reading Paul writes from prison in Rome to the Christian community in Philippi. He is filled with joy and gratitude for their encouragement, their financial support, and their friendship. He sees all these as a gift from God. And he assures the Philippians that, just as they support him, God will support them. This is possible only because they rely on the help of God, who nourishes them with grace and strength.

Jesus's parable of the wedding banquet brings up many questions for us. Who refuses an invitation to a royal banquet? Why is God portrayed as a vengeful king? What about that wedding garment? Of course, there is a difference between a parable and an allegory. Parables often provoke questions about our own lives that should be obvious to us but that we often overlook. Thus if it was foolish for those people to reject an invitation to a royal wedding feast, what sense do our own actions make in response to a far greater invitation?

Indeed, with this parable, Jesus is announcing a marvelous new event in the history of Israel's relationship to God: Jesus the Messiah is here, and the banquet, the fulfillment of so many prophecies given through the centuries, is at hand. God is inviting Israel to the fullness of joy. However, in the end, the leaders of Israel reject the invitation.

The parable shows us a vision of the Kingdom as a feast whose doors are thrown wide open to anyone wicked or good, rich or poor. It is not an affair for the elite only; people who dine in the Grand Ballroom and in the soup kitchen are welcome to mingle. But the man without a wedding garment seems to be an exception. Why is the king so hard on somebody just dragged in from the road? The king has provided wedding garments for all the guests. Perhaps the man represents those who accept the invitation but are at best half-hearted.

Pope Francis reminds us that God is the ultimate source of all creation. To draw on the imagery from the readings of this day, we can think of God as the host of that vast banquet of creation to which all are

This resource is provided by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with the Integral Faith Team, a group of male and female religious, priests, and lay people dedicated to serving the Church.

Homily Helps (cont.)

† **Comment for the day (cont.):**

invited and by which all are sustained. And in our day God calls us to care for the earth from which this abundance comes. The poor in particular are invited to the banquet where God will "wipe away the tears from every face." The Scriptures indeed emphasize that the invitation extends to those whom the world casts aside and who themselves may have thought they were left out: the last, the lost, and the least. Pope Francis is especially concerned about the poor, and it is they who suffer first and most deeply from our planet's degradation. In the parable of the wedding feast, the original invitees to the banquet were too busy to join the celebration because they had their private agendas to tend. We are invited to be co-hosts with God in ensuring that the banquet on earth continues to be open to all. Will we commit ourselves to the task or will we place first our own priorities and be "too busy" to attend?

† **Scripture passages to note:**

Isaiah 25: On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples.

Psalms 23: He guides me in right paths for his name's sake.

Philippians 4: I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me.

Matthew 22: The servants went out into the street and gathered all they found, good and bad alike.

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:**

In the meantime we come together to take charge of this home which has been entrusted to us, knowing that all the good which exists here will be taken up into the heavenly feast. (#244)

"Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest." [citing the Bolivian Bishops' Conference 2012]...The impact of present imbalances is also seen in the premature death of many of the poor in conflicts sparked by the shortage of resources, and in any number of other problems which are insufficiently represented on global agendas. (#48)

The mindset which leaves no room for sincere concern for the environment is the same mindset which lacks concern for the inclusion of the most vulnerable members of society. (#196)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we might be given the grace to see beyond our individual concerns and problems so as to commit our time and energy to caring for our common home, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That we might advocate for the inclusion of the people of this earth who are suffering from the effects of climate change so that they too can rejoice in the feast that God provides for all, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

Webpage: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help

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