



CELEBRATING AT HOME

28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Invitations refused & accepted (Matthew 22:1-14)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God
to be the Church,
**the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God
in this world.**

Eternal God,
your love for us
surpasses all our hopes and desires.

**May our love for you express itself
in our eagerness to do good for others.**

Scripture Reading (*Matthew 22:1-14*)

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people:
“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king
who gave a feast for his son’s wedding. He sent his
servants to call those who had been invited, but they
would not come.

Next he sent some more servants. ‘Tell those who
have been invited’ he said, ‘that I have my banquet
all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have
been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the
wedding.’ But they were not interested: one went off to
his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized
his servants, maltreated them and killed them.

The king was furious. He dispatched his troops,
destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then
he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready; but as
those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to
the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you
can find to the wedding.’ So these servants went out
to the roads and collected together everyone they
could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall
was filled with guests.

When the king came in to look at the guests he
noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding
garment, and said to him, “How did you get in here,
my friend, without a wedding garment?” And the man
was silent. 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.” For many are called but few are chosen.’

Reflection - *Invitations refused and accepted*

The third of the parables addressed to the chief
priests and the elders is our Gospel today. Told in the
context of a wedding feast given by a great King it’s a
parable in three parts.

The first part is about God’s gracious invitation and
its indifferent and sometimes violent refusal by those
invited first (the religious and lay leaders).

Second part: God’s invitation having been rejected
by the first to whom it was offered, is now offered to
others - good and bad alike (the sinners).

Third part: the story of the guest without a wedding
garment (one who accepts the invitation but does not
change - a little like the son in the first parable who
said, “Yes”, but didn’t go to the vineyard).

The wedding garment is a symbol of a converted life
full of good deeds.

The sense of the last line of the Gospel: “Many are
called but few are chosen”, is that all are called to
salvation, but it is only had by those who accept the
invitation and who change and yield good deeds.
There is no room for complacency.

All three Gospel parables of the last three Sundays are
about conversion. Conversion is not just turning away
from sin but a radical reorienting of one’s life (turning)
towards God. Repentance is not so much being sorry
for past sins as a total change of direction. Conversion
is impossible for the self-righteous because they don’t
believe they need it. Hardness of heart and the refusal
to listen are two great biblical sins.

In the three parables, St Matthew is urging his
community to seek after true righteousness which

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comes from conversion and repentance, which flows from allowing the vision of God to fill their eyes and hearts. The kingdom has been entrusted to them, they are to produce its fruit of good deeds through a life of continual turning towards God.

Hard hearts, blocked ears, blind eyes, refusing to change are the path to death.

We are those who choose Life.

Prayers of Intercession

Jesus, you are our companion
and helper on the way.

**Help us know your presence
in our most hidden suffering.**

May you continue to work in our hearts,
**filling us with fresh vision
and completing the work of conversion in us.**

Spirit of God,
enlighten our minds and renew our hearts.
**May we be healing and compassion
for all your people.**

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

God of creation,
you invite us to the feast of your love.
You know of what we are made
and you give us all that we need.
Open our lives to the fullness you offer.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us now and always. Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
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