

St. Frances Cabrini - Lebanon, TN
Twenty-Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year A
October 15, 2017

Is 25:6-10A

Phil 4:12-14, 19-20

Mt 22:1-14

Today we hear of a wedding feast. This is near and dear to Amy and my heart. In one week, Twin #1 is getting married. Twin #2 is just six weeks later. I don't think Hallmark could write a story like this. So our second collection today... Just kidding.

We have been hearing Jesus invite people to God's kingdom over the last few weeks. He is also sending a message to the Scribes and Pharisees that they will not be included unless they change their ways. Jesus was sent for the lost house of Israel. Most ignored him. So Jesus turns to others.

Before we discuss the gospel, let's look at what a first century Jewish wedding would have looked like. First, couples were betrothed to each other at a very young age, usually as children. They may not even meet each other until the day of the wedding. Secondly, the father of the groom would pay a dowry for the bride to compensate her family for lost earnings. So if the daughter was used to work the fields, the father would have to hire a helper to replace the daughter. This is why he would receive a dowry. Bottom line, she was the property of her father. Lastly, no one knew when the groom would be coming to get the bride. Now, this we have heard in the gospels. It is why Jesus would say we must always be ready.

So let's look at this parable. The king is certainly God, who planned this celebration. The king's son is Jesus. The servants are the prophets and the other religious leaders who serve God by calling others to be in union with God. Some paid for this with their lives. The first guests, invited originally, appeared to have

been respectable people who, when the final call came, were preoccupied with their own affairs. This can be likened to political insubordination.

This is a cool invitation. Why didn't they listen? That isn't a question for just the first century Jew. It has applied to peoples of all time. It applied to those the prophets spoke to. It has applied to every generation since Christ. Does it apply to us today? Just look around us. There is so much relativism and individualism in our world today. What is in it for me? It is all about me. Yes, it does apply.

Now, let's be careful not to cast the first stone, thinking we are without sin. Look in the mirror. We too ignore God's invitation to the banquet from time to time. And yet, God has given us the grace to forgive us. God has given us the grace to continue to call us to the banquet. This is why we have the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Remember last month in my homily how we discussed our role to point out the errored ways of the sinner? *The King dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast.* God is calling us to work again. We are the servants. We are called to summon the invited guests. We are called to evangelize. We are not just spectators. We are called to be prophets. We are called to action.

So who are you calling? Don't just look to the elite. God's choice was random. God's choice is random. He calls those who most will pass up. He calls those who we would pass up. Look at Jesus. He called sinners. He called prostitutes. He called tax collectors. Our gospel today is from a tax collector. Let's not be too picky who we evangelize to. If Christ wasn't, why would we be?

One theme seems to connect all the readings for this Sunday. That theme is our total dependency on God. We depend upon God's grace of mercy. We depend upon God's Spirit to give us guidance; give us direction for our lives. We depend upon God's Spirit to give us guidance to be his prophets; to be his servants, to carry out his will.

Are you ready? Are you ready to accept the invitation to the feast? Are you ready to be God's servant to summon others? Are you ready?