Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 22:1-14): Jesus again in reply spoke to the chief priests and elders of the people in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come. A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: "Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast."'

Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.

Then he said to his servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.' The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to meet the guests, he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. The king said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' Many are invited, but few are chosen."

"Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find"

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Today, Jesus presents to us the king (the Father), inviting — through his "servants" (the prophets) — to the banquet of the covenant of his Son with humanity (salvation). First, He did it with Israel, “but they refused

to come” (Mt 22:3). In the face of this refusal, the Father continues to insist: “I have prepared my banquet… and everything is ready; come to the feast” (Mt 22:4). But such disdain, mockery, and death of the servants lead to the sending of troops, the death of those murderers, and the burning of "their" city (cf. Mt 22:6-7): Jerusalem.

So, other "servants" (the apostles) — were sent to go to the “the main roads” (Mt 22:9): “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them…”, the Lord Jesus would say later in Mt 28:19 — and thus we, the rest of humanity, were invited: “all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests” (Mt 22:10), meaning the Church.

Even so, the issue is not just being in the wedding hall due to the invitation, but it also has a lot to do with the dignity with which one is present (the "wedding garment," cf. Mt 22:12). St. Jerome commented on this: "The festive garments are the Lord's commandments and the works accomplished according to the Law and the Gospel, which are the garments of the new man." In other words, acts of charity that should accompany faith.

We know that Mother Teresa of Calcutta would go out every night to the streets of Calcutta to gather the dying to give them, with love, a good death: clean, well-clothed, and if possible, baptized. Once she commented, "I am not afraid of dying because when I stand before the Father, there will be so many poor people I gave Him in wedding garments who will know how to defend me." Blessed be she! — Let us learn the lesson.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Let us not be insensible of Christ's loving kindness. For if he had acted as we do, we would have been lost indeed. Therefore, let us become his disciples and learn to live in the Christian way” (Saint Ignatius of Antioch)

- “Medicine has extended man's time. But do we really have time? Or does time have us? Most, in any case, do not have time for God, they need their time for themselves, for their “business”” (Benedict XVI)

- “This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him (1Cor 2:9)" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1027)