

# Tuesday of the Thirty-first Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk 14,15-24*): One of those at the table said to Jesus, «Happy are those who eat at the banquet in the kingdom of God!». Jesus replied, «A man once gave a feast and invited many guests. When it was time for the feast he sent his servant to tell those he had invited to come, for everything was ready. But all alike began to make excuses. The first said: ‘Please excuse me. I must go and see the piece of land I have just bought’. Another said: ‘I am sorry, but I am on my way to try out the five yoke of oxen I have just bought’. Still another said, ‘How can I come when I have just married?’.

»The servant returned alone and reported this to his master. Upon hearing the account, the master of the house flew into a rage and ordered his servant: ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame’. The servant reported after a while: ‘Sir, your orders have been carried out, but there is still room’. The master said: ‘Go out to the highways and country lanes and force people to come in, to make sure my house is full. I tell you, none of those invited will have a morsel of my feast’».

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*«Go out to the highways and country lanes and force people to come in, to make sure my house is full»*

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Today, the Lord offers us an image of eternity represented by a banquet. The

**banquet denotes the place where the family and friends gather together to celebrate and enjoy the company, the conversation and the friendship, sitting around the same table. This image speaks of our intimacy with God as Trinity and the joy we will find in the Promised Land. He has made everything for us and He calls us in «for everything was ready» (Lk 14:17). He wants us with him; He wants all men and women by His side, each one of us.**

**We must, however, yearn to go. And, despite we know quite well that Heaven is where we can be at our best, where we should stay eternally, exceeding the noblest humans ambitions —«What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him» (1Cor 2:9) and, therefore, without any possible comparison—, we are, all the same, capable of refusing the divine invitation missing forever the best offering God could ever make us: to share His home, his table, his intimacy, forever and ever. What a responsibility!**

**Unfortunately, we are capable of swapping God for practically anything. Some, as we read in today's Gospel, for a piece of land; others, for some yoke of oxen. And you and I, what are we willing to trade He, who is our God, and his invitation, for? There are those that out of laziness, sloppiness, convenience, refrain from fulfilling their duties of love towards God: is God so unworthy we can replace Him with anything? Let our response to the divine offering be always a yes, full of gratitude and admiration.**