

## Homily Notes for Sunday Oct 11, 2026 28<sup>th</sup> Ordinary A

Readings: Isaiah 25:6-10a, Ps 23, Philippians 4:12-14, Gospel – Matt 22:1-14

Could it be that this parable of Jesus, one of his last teachings during his last week in Jerusalem, can teach us both what is necessary for our personal salvation, as well as helping us to understand the values that undergird our very way of life in Western Civilization?

**1. Let's look first at the whole parable, then focus on the poor man who had accepted the invitation to the feast, but then was judged unworthy and condemned for his lack of a wedding garment.**

**2. This parable is first of all a condemnation of the Jewish leaders who would not believe in Jesus as the Son of God.** The invited guests, who did not come to the wedding feast when the time had come, are the Jewish leaders, especially the Scribes and the Pharisees. The first three parables Jesus teaches, after his entry into Jerusalem, are condemnatory parables against the leaders of the Jews. Then, almost immediately following this in Matthew is chapter 23, an extended denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus repeats, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees..." but let us go on.

**3. The Fathers of the Church see the Jewish people, especially the Scribes and the Pharisees, as the first invitees who would not come to the banquet.** God first chose the Jewish people as His chosen people, but when they rejected the call to follow Jesus with indifference and hostility, they were condemned, cast into "the darkness outside," and Jerusalem was destroyed. But the Gentiles also need to respond obediently to the call they have received; otherwise, they will suffer the fate of being cast "into the darkness outside."

**4. Then our vision moves to those out in the world who are also invited.** This refers to the Gentiles and foreshadows St. Paul's mission to the Gentiles. This also represents that God desires all to be saved (See 1 Tim 2:4) The image of the wedding garment, which one guest did not have, although he showed up at the feast because he had been invited, **this wedding garment signifies the disposition a person must have for entering into the Kingdom of Heaven.** Even though he belongs to the Church, if he does not have these dispositions, he will be condemned on the Day of God's judgment. This is fundamental Catholic theology, that everyone to be saved must show up with the disposition of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and the obedience to do good works (Jn 2:14 – 26, Mt 25:31-46). This represents for me, personally, why I needed to leave Protestantism and become Catholic.

**5. Several of the Fathers of the Church can help us understand the symbolism of the "wedding garment", hence, what we must do to be saved.**

Origin: "The marriage feast of Christ and the Church is filled, when they who were found by the Apostles, being restored to God, sat down to the feast. But since it was necessary that both bad and good should be called, not that the bad should continue bad, but they should put off the garments not suitable for the wedding and should put on the marriage garments, that is, charity, mercy and kindness. For this cause the King goes out, that He may see them before the supper is set before them, that they may be detained who have the wedding garment in which He is delighted, and that he may condemn the opposite.

This shows that we must both respond to the call of Jesus by repentance and faith, that we must seek to repent of our sins, living a life of charity, mercy and kindness.

**6. Or St. Jerome:**

The marriage garment is the Commandments of the Lord, and the works which are done under the Law and the Gospel. These form the clothing of the new man. Whoso among the Christian body shall be found in the day of judgment not to have these is straightway condemned. "He says to him, Friend, how did you come here, not having a wedding garment?" He calls him "friend," because he was invited to the wedding as being a friend by faith; but He charges him for lack of manners in polluting the elegance of the wedding entertainment by his filthy dress.

**7. These two quotes give us insight to a common problem today. Some people will think that the promises of this world, secular utopianism (modern day Communism) is about the same as the Christian vision.** Both seem to offer justice and prosperity. But the foundation of the two is very different. This parable and the other readings can help clarify for us the distinctiveness between our Christian faith (which was the faith also of the founding fathers of our nation) and other utopian, dysfunctional ways of seeking blessings and prosperity.

**9. First, for the Christian, the fulfillment of this vision of joy and prosperity is not just of this world, it will be fulfilled completely in the world to come.** Isaiah makes this clear when he says, “He will destroy death forever.” For Jesus, the Kingdom of God is imperfectly fulfilled in this life but completely fulfilled in eternity (See Jn 17:3). Both in this reading and in another passage from Isaiah (55:1-3), Isaiah says that God promises a great feast. “You who have not money, come, receive grain and eat. Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk! Couldn’t it sound like Communism is compatible with Christianity?”

**10. What is the difference between this promise of God and the promises of Socialists and Communists?** Let us go back to the words of Jerome. The promises of God will come true only if God’s Commandments are followed. Everyone is called to believe in Jesus and to repent of their sins. In the Christian life we are called to virtue, and virtue is a habit of good works. The wonderful promises of God come with the standards of God. There is a requirement of living out a virtuous life, following the Commandments and the words of Jesus. The Christian promise is fulfilled after our death for those who are judged worthy for heaven. Others are condemned to Hell. Modern day secular utopians like Communists and Socialists do not share our vision of “invisible realities,” that is, the spiritual world. They reject the teachings and values of God. They are atheists, wanting nothing to do with the authority of, nor the Commandments of God, but want the power to define truth for themselves. The results are failure, exploitation and injustice. But the spiritual values of God do have practical positive effects in this life. See my resource sheet, “Evidences for the Supernatural” available after Mass.

**11. The second reading:** Here St. Paul gives witness that there are practical worldly effects of faith and good works. He says,

“I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance. In every circumstance and in all things, I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need.”

These are values which lead to peace, humility, sacrifice for others and prosperity for all. This, I believe, is the reason that the Western Christian world has become so good and so prosperous. Compare the results. Everyone in the world is trying to immigrate into Western Europe and the United States.

**12. This has one further implication.** How can we as a people be formed in virtue? We need spiritual leadership. Is this not why we pray for vocations at the end of Mass? Our leadership is getting older. We need a great crop of gifted young men to respond to the call of God to dedicate their lives to the formation of the People of God while doing battle with the Devil and his evil forces. We have been called to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, but we do not have adequate leadership into the future to achieve the will of God. This we need for the sake of our own salvation, for the continued ministry of the Church and the Christian community, and even further for the preservation of this great nation. When will the necessary men step forward to provide the formation for the wedding garment that we all need? When will the necessary families encourage their sons and daughters to commit themselves to serving the Lord. What will be our response to the Word of God?

**13. In conclusion, you may have heard of the speech that our good Catholic Secretary of State Marco Rubio made this past week in defense of Western Civilization.** Could it be that our need for more, faithful priests is necessary for each of us for our salvation, but also for the defense of our entire civilization? What is at stake?

### **13. Reflection questions:**

1. What is the one point to get out of this Mass to help me become the-better-version-of myself that God wants?
2. What is the one decision I should offer up to God at the time of the offering? (GIRM)
3. What are the key insights to Christian living that are so important that I need to disciple my children to become?