

Link to Liturgy



The Wedding Feast 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lessons and Discussions

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“My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?”

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Entrance Antiphon (Ps. 129:3-4) – Simple English Propers

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

Si iniquitates *Ps 130 (129): 3, 4*

III

Lord, if you were to take in-to account our in-

i-iquities, * who would withstand the test? But forgiveness

abides with you, O God of Is-ra-el.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

Alternate options:Hymns

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

For All the Saints

God of Our Fathers

Holy, Holy, Holy

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Songs of Praise

Amazing Love (Billy James Foote)

How He loves us (David Crowder Band)

Collect – Roman Missal

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

May your grace, O Lord, we pray,
at all times go before us and follow after
and make us always determined
to carry out good works.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

“The End” Notes

- [1] See Catholicism Episode Three (Outline VII)
- [2] The Order of the Mass; Communion Rite
- [3] Pope John Paul II to the European Convention of the Missionaries to Migrants, 27-6-86
- [4] See Catholicism Episode Three (Outline VII)
- [5] Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church [YouCat]; page 203
- [6] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy packet
- [7] Brother Roger Schutz
- [8] Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church [YouCat]; section 127
- [9] See Catholicism Episode Three (Outline VII)
- [10] Saint Therese the Little Flower
- [11] The Order of the Mass (Introductory Rite)
- [12] The Order of the Mass (Communion Rite)
- [13] Catechism of the Catholic Church; Section 2837
- [14] The Order of the Mass (Eucharistic Prayer II)
- [15] The Order of the Mass (Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II)
- [16] Abbot Gueranger, OSB; The Liturgical Year; Vol 11
- [17] Catechism of the Catholic Church; Section 2837

Oremus. Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui gloriosae Virginis Matris Mariae corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante, praeparasti, da, ut cuius commemoratione laetamur; eius pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Slave Regina (English Translation)

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee to we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, Who by the working of the Holy Spirit didst prepare both body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother, Mary, that she might deserve to be made a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant that we who rejoice in her memory, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from present evils and from lasting death, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

one God, for ever and ever. A-men.

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

Gospel Reading – Matthew 22:1-14– Roman Missal

NOTE: *In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is read on the Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
- Glory to you O Lord

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 guest 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, 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From Saint Pope Gregory the Great

The kingdom of heaven is the assembly of the just; for, the Lord says by a prophet: “Heaven is My throne”; and Solomon says:

“the soul of the just man is the throne of wisdom”; and Paul calls Christ the Wisdom of God. If, therefore, heaven be the throne of God, we must evidently conclude that, as Wisdom is God, and the soul of the just man is the throne of Wisdom, this soul is a heaven....The kingdom of heaven, then, is the assemblage of the just....If this kingdom is said to be like a King, who made a marriage for his Son, your charity at once understands who is this King, who is the Father of a Son, King like Himself. It is He, of whom the psalmist says: “Give to the King Thy judgment, O God, and to the King’s Son Thy justice!” God the Father made the marriage of God His Son, when He wished that He, who had been God before all ages, should become Man towards the end of ages. But we must not, on that account, suppose that there are two persons in Jesus Christ, our God and our Savior....It is perhaps, clearer and safer to say, that the King made a marriage for His Son, in that, by the mystery of the Incarnation, he united the Church to Him. The womb of the Virgin Mother was the nuptial-chamber of that Bridegroom, of whom the psalmists says: He hath set His tabernacle in the sun: and He, as a Bridegroom, cometh out of His bride-chamber.”

Responsory – Office of Readings – 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord;
- they will praise you forever.

Many nations will join the Lord on that day, and they will be his people;
- they will praise you forever.

The Father invites all to reconcile – Lesson and Discussion *“those who were invited were not worthy to come”*

In the parable of the wedding feast, we see a king and his Son. It is important that there is a king and Son. The king is the father who loves his son. We see the king (lover) and the son (beloved), the love between the two is the shared love. The wedding feast manifests the shared love; a love is so grand, that the king and son want others to partake in it. Saint Augustine describes the mystery of the Trinity as a lover, a beloved and the shared love between lover and beloved.[1] God is the lover. Jesus is the beloved. The love shared is so great that it is its own person, the Holy Spirit. Through God’s amazing love for us, He calls us to share in this love. This lesson is lesson 1 of 3 and is focused on

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina

V

S Alve Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-
cé-do, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-
les, fí-li- i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-rámus, geméntes et flen-
tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advo-cá-ta
nostra, illos tu- os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos con-
vér-te. Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu- i,
no-bis post hoc exsí- li- um osténde. O cle- mens:
O pi- a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí- a.

The musical notation consists of ten staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The notes are represented by small black squares on a five-line staff. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words aligned with specific notes. There are double bar lines throughout the score, indicating the end of phrases or sections.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficamur promissionibus Christi.

The wardrobe is full and the garments are plenty. We are without excuse if we arrive at the end of our pilgrimage not wearing these garments. Saint Augustine says that even the readings and songs are necessary. “The readings you hear each day in church and the hymns you hear and sing. All these are necessities for our pilgrimage.”[17]

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – A Morning Prayer

This prayer is a morning offering writing by Saint Therese the little flower. The prayer is an expression of her vocation, the vocation to love completely.

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

O my God! I offer Thee all my actions of this day for the intentions and for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I desire to sanctify every beat of my heart, my every thought, my simplest works, by uniting them to Its infinite merits; and I wish to make reparation for my sins by casting them into the furnace of Its Merciful Love.

O my God! I ask of Thee for myself and for those whom I hold dear, the grace to fulfill perfectly Thy Holy Will, to accept for love of Thee the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that we may one day be united together in Heaven for all Eternity. Amen.

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

the God the Father and how He invites us to reconciliation and communion with Him. We are called into the love of God, first through reconciliation.

The First step is reconciliation. We are called to be reconciled with God. Realize it is us who must reconcile with God and not God reconciling with us. We are the ones who sin and turn away from Him. None of us are worthy to come to the feast, yet the Father still invites us. We remind our self of this at each Mass when we prayer, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”[2] God is the constant lover. God the lover loves not only the Son, but also all of creation. God “has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-21) This is why the Church prays each morning in the Canticle of Zachariah, “You my child shall be called the prophet of the most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins.” (Luke 1:68-79) Saint John the Baptist called the world to repentance. For the forgiveness of sins gives rise to the knowledge of salvation. We come to the realization that salvation and reconciliation are possible and thus we are prepared to receive the love of Jesus Christ.

MUSIC - SHIROCK - Still Young Official Music Video - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:05

<http://youtu.be/usc5bipa5GA>

Jesus Christ is the gift of the Father. Jesus Christ is the lover desiring to love us, the beloved. Jesus is the lover, and we are the beloveds. Nothing prevents Jesus from loving us. **What prevents us from loving Him?** It is true that we long for Him. Saint Augustine says, that are hearts are restless until we rest in God. **The man in this video is restless. He is longing for love, but what is holding him back?** The baggage that he is carrying holds him back. Once he let’s go of his baggage (sin) and it is destroyed in the fire (absolution), he is free to run toward the one He loves. Once we let go of the baggage we carry

we are free to run toward our lover, Jesus Christ. Un-repentance holds us back from accepting the love of God.

We can only be reconciled with God, if God wills the reconciliation. For example the Father in the parable of the prodigal son had every right to not be reconciled with his son. His son had demanded his inheritance and then squandered it carelessly. The father however allows and even desires the reconciliation and when the son repents the reconciliation takes place. It is a joyful reconciliation in which the father throws a feast for the son. In the parable of the wedding feast we again see a father (King), throwing a feast (wedding feast) for his son. The story of the wedding feast is not a story about reconciliation between father and son, but a call to reconciliation for the invited guests. It is the invited guests that the father desires to be united with. In both the parable of the prodigal son and the parable of the wedding feast a feast is given and those desiring reconciliation are present. Also in both parables there are those unwilling to attend the feast.

How do the invited guests respond to the invitation? They ignore it. They are called to reconciliation and communion with the father and they ignore it. **What do they choose instead of the feast?** Some choose their farm, while some choose their business. This is almost a total rejection from both the spheres of society, agriculture and business, rural and urban, city and country. The invited guests are the chosen people the Israelites and the rejection of the Messiah was widespread in all sectors of life. This is also a warning to us. Many times we have a prejudice that the people in the city are too busy for God, or that the people in the country are too ignorant for God. The parable warns us that all, whether in the city or country, whether they work in business or agriculture are susceptible to ignoring God. **Did all reject the invitation?** No. The Gospel says, "Some ignored the invitation and went away." The Blessed Virgin Mary and the apostles were all faithful Jews and they were not counted in the "some" that ignored the invitation. They wholeheartedly accepted the invitation. For them and others Christ was the fulfillment of their belief. He was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. The Father desires not just to be reconciled to the chosen people, but also to the Gentiles and so he commands the servants to go out and get the good and bad alike. The servants, "went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests." Their response from the Gentiles seems to be great; the hall was filled with guests.

clothes have been set out. Let's say the child chooses to run around in his pajamas all morning and gets distracted by other things. The child will not be ready for the party and the mother might even say, "Because you did not get dressed, you are not going to the party."

What are the garments the clothes that God sets out for us? How does the King clothe us? We could think of the Church as the wardrobe from which God gives us the necessary garments. There are many examples of the garments (gifts) that the king gives us. In the Rite of Baptism we are given a white garment and expected to wear it and keep it spotless. During the reception of the white garment in the Rite of Baptism the following is said.

Celebrant: [Child's Name], you have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ. See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

All:Amen.

The person in the parable did not arrive at the feast wearing clothed in garment. **What if we arrive in heaven with a dirty garment or no garment at all?** We will not be welcome in heaven. To put on the garment is to put on Christ, the garment is our dignity and we must respect that dignity in our self and in all the baptized. Those that are not baptized, we want to let them share in that dignity by putting on Christ and becoming a new creation.

We are without excuse if we do not clothe our self or in the case of our baptismal vows remained clothed. Without this garment we are like Adam and Eve in the garden. We are naked in the garden of life and thus hide from God. Many times we can feel embarrassed when we are underdressed or not dressed appropriately at an event. When need to ask our self regularly if we are underdressed or not dressed with the spiritual garments we have been given.

What are other examples of the garments God gives? The garments are any grace and virtue offered by God. All of the Sacraments, the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, the prayers and liturgy.

Now, for such a feast, and in such a place, if there be any deficiency, it can only be on the part of the guests. Let them, then, be careful not to draw down upon themselves, in this general and last examination, the displeasure of the great King, who has called them to an alliance with Himself. Though He has condescended to call them, notwithstanding their extreme poverty, from the public streets and highways, He has given them abundant time to lay aside their tatters; and knowing that they could not get ready of themselves, he has placed at their disposal, for the marriage-feast, the richest garments of His grace and virtue. Woe, then, to him who on the last day shall be found not having the wedding garment of charity! Such a want would admit no excuse; and the King would justly punish it, by excluding the guilty man from the feast, as one that had insulted His Son.”[16]

God is patient with us by giving all the necessary time to put on the garment of salvation. He has given them abundant time to lay aside their tatters, to lay aside “farm” and “business” and to clothe us in Christ. We must as our first Pope, Saint Peter says; consider this time as the patience of God and as salvation itself. “Therefore beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace. And consider the patience of our Lord as salvation...” (2 Peter 3:14-15)

LINK – History of Religion

<http://www.mapsofwar.com/images/Religion.swf>

It was said above, “that His ambassadors, according to His command, have traversed the whole earth, bringing together all nations for this day of joy of His heart.” The Churches call us to invite others to the wedding feast. This is why the missionaries of the Church have risked their lives traversing the whole earth. This maps shows that this evangelization is important to all religions. The map also shows the success of this Christian evangelization.

Not only has God called us to heaven, but knowing that we cannot get our self ready for heaven, He gives us everything necessary go on this pilgrimage. If we do not take advantage of “everything necessary” then we will be judged accordingly. A child might be invited to a birthday party, but might be too young to pick out the correct clothes from his wardrobe. The mother picks out the clothes for him and sets them on his bed. It is the child’s responsibility to get himself dressed once the

The Father in his generosity desires to be reconciled and be in communion with all. **Is it easier for the gentile than for the Jew?** It appears as if only a few of the Jews responded to the invitation and that many Gentiles responded. We see in the early Church many of the Gentiles did respond to the invitation and the Gospel was spread to the whole world. **Are we (the gentiles) still responding with the same zeal and vigor?** When Saint Peter, Saint Paul, Saint Patrick, Saint Boniface, Blessed Junipero Serra and all the other missionaries when out into the “main roads,” the response was many times positive, and the “hall (church) was filled with guests.” In modern times, the gentiles have become like the chosen people in the parable, who have now begun to ignore the invitation. **What has caused the gentiles (us) to ignore the invitation of God in the modern world?**

In many countries that were once evangelized there is now a need to re-evangelize. “Today, after twenty centuries, the Church senses the urgency and the duty to carry on with renewed efficacy the work of evangelizing the world and re-evangelizing Europe. It is a pastoral choice, repurposed in view of the third millennium, which flows from the mission to save the whole man and all men in the truth of Christ. Today more than ever, the evangelization of the world is tied to the re-evangelization of Europe.”[3] This is one of the reasons that Saint John Paul II began World Youth Days and so many other apostolates and initiatives have formed. This new or re-evangelization is part of the Church’s saving mission. The Church exists for the sake of the world and therefore is like the servants in this parable, who go out into the main roads and invite whoever they find. **How can we re-evangelize in our homes, schools, work places, towns?**

What are the “main roads” in our time? One of the main roads in our time is the Internet. Saint Paul used the Roman roads, which were the most high tech latest means of travel and communication in his time. The Church must now and does us the “main roads” of our time. The Church has great websites, TV stations, radio stations, etc. **How can we use these main roads to evangelize? What kind of invitation is being sent out on our Facebook, Twitter, and cell phone? What kind of invitation are we listening to on the Internet, the TV, the movies, music, etc.? Where do we see the invitation of God in modern media?**

The Wedding Feast: We become the beloved – Lesson and Discussion

“a king who gave a wedding feast for his son”

In the Gospel we see a king and his Son. It is important that there is a king and Son. The king is the father who loves his son. We see the king (lover) and the son (beloved), the love between the two is the shared love. The wedding feast manifests the shared love; a love is so grand, that the king and son want others to partake in it. Saint Augustine describes the mystery of the Trinity as a lover, a beloved and the shared love between lover and beloved.[4] God is the lover. Jesus is the beloved. The love shared is so great that it is its own person, the Holy Spirit. We are called into this love. This lesson is lesson 2 of 3 and is focused on the Son, Jesus Christ and how we are called into the love of God by becoming the beloved of Jesus Christ.

How are we called into the love of Father and Son? God is the lover. Jesus is the beloved. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” (John 3:16) “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

The Second Step is to become the beloved. We can be repentant, but what if we do not allow our self to be loved? What if we do not allow Jesus, the lover, to love us, the beloved? Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta says, “Tuberculosis and cancer are not the most terrible sicknesses. I think that a much more terrible sickness is to be unwanted and unloved.”[5] We have to realize that we are loved and then we have to allow our self to be loved. There was once a retreat that took place and at the retreat there was an Adoration chapel in which retreatants would walk past on the way to meals. One man noticed that each time he passed by the chapel for breakfast, then lunch, then dinner, he always saw a sister deep in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. He wondered to himself what she could be praying and how the prayer could keep her focused for so long. At the end of the retreat he asked the sister what she was praying in the chapel and how she was able to be in there so long. The sister told the man that she was not praying at all, but simply sitting there and allowing Jesus to love her. Jesus loves, desires, and wants to be united to us all.

be more important? In the parable the people ignored and went away for “farm” and “business,” today we ignore and turn away for entertainment, sports, work, etc. The feast is far more important than “farm” and “business,” but the people do not feel this way. **Can the Mass compare to anything else we could do? Is Mass equal to entertainment, sports, and work?** Some ignored the wedding feast. The rest however actually mistreated and killed the servants of the King. There are many people in our society that choose to ignore the Church and the rest actually mistreat and persecute the Church. **Who are the servants of the King in our time?** The Pope, Bishops, priests and in fact any of the faithful are the servants and in many cases when these people send out the invitation they are captured, mistreated and even killed through martyrdom.

Group Two – Those who filled the hall

“The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests.” These guests responded to the invitation and were welcomed. It is important to note that both the bad and the good are welcomed. The bad of course will not stay bad, but rather will be reconciled and brought into communion at the feast. We see the generosity of the king (God) through the invitation; we see the generosity of the people (us) by our response of filling the hall. Our generosity is in response to the generosity of God. This is the group that we want to be in.

Group Three – Those reduced to silence

There is a third group, which is represented by a single person. “My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment? But he was reduced to silence.” This third group, this person reduced to silence, summarizes all of salvation History and points to the eternal wedding feast, completely experienced in heaven. This person reduced to silence is the one who has been given grace and virtue but rejected it. This person is called “my friend.” He therefore knows the king and what the king offers but does not do what the king asks.

“Our heavenly King has confided, to the ministers of His love, the work of calling from every people the new guests. But now that His ambassadors, according to His command, have traversed the whole earth, bringing together all nations for this day of joy of His heart, He Himself is coming in person, to see that nothing is wanting to the due preparation for the feast, and to give the signal for the eternal banquet for the divine nuptials.

Son and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The Gloria gives adoration and thanksgiving to each person of the Blessed Trinity a praise that we will later proclaim in the Creed, which is also Trinitarian.

Collect – Supplication

The Priest then says, “Let us pray.” It is this prayer, often called the “opening prayer” that is properly called the “collect” because it collects the prayers of all the people. The priest collects these prayers and offers them to the Father. The Collect addresses the first person of the Trinity, God the Father. This collect, in which the prayers of the faithful are collected and offered to the Father, will be seen again in the offertory, when the gifts of the faithful are collected and offered to the Father through the Son.

Not only does the Divine Liturgy (the Mass) open with this adoration, contrition, thanksgiving and supplication, but also the Liturgy of the Hours opens with the same prayers. The Liturgy of the Hours begins each day with the Invitatory (Psalm 95). This Psalm gives adoration (Come let us bow down and worship, bending the knee before the Lord, our maker). It gives thanksgiving (Let us approach him with praise and thanksgiving). It expresses contrition as we are reminded to “not grow stubborn, as your fathers did in the wilderness.” We also ask for the help, that our hearts don’t go astray and that we can know God’s ways and ultimately enter into His rest.

Wardrobe and Garments – Lesson and Discussion

“My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?”

How do the people in the parable respond to the invitation to go to the feast? How do others and we respond to the invitation to the wedding feast?

Group One – those who ignored, mistreated and killed

“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.” This group was destroyed.

When do we turn away from the invitation of God, especially the invitation to Mass? What are we turning away for? In these lessons it has been explained that this is taking place at this wedding feast and this wedding feast in the Mass is a foretaste of the wedding feast of heaven. **What possibly could**

The first lesson and first step focused much on the Father’s love for the Son and for all of humanity and the invitation that the Father gives. This lesson and the second step focuses on the second person of the Trinity the Son, Jesus Christ. We know from the Old Testament that God wants to be so united to His people that he desires to marry them. “On that day says the Lord, she shall call me ‘My husband,’ and never again ‘My baal.’...I will espouse you to me forever. I will espouse you in fidelity, and you shall know that Lord.” (Hosea 2:18; 21-22)

How is God going to espouse His people? He espouses His people through the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the lover who calls us his beloved. Jesus shows His love for us in that He makes us his beloved by espousing himself to us. It is in the person of Jesus, that we see the Father’s love. Saint Philip says to Jesus, “Show us the Father.” Jesus responds, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9) **What does it mean that Jesus espouses Himself to us?** He marries us. He is the lover; we are the receivers of His love, the beloved.

How does He marry us? Saint Pope Gregory the Great explains that God is like the King in this parable that made a marriage for His Son and who invited guests to the marriage. Those invited are not just invited to watch, but are actually invited to be the bride. “It is perhaps, clearer and safer to say, that the King made a marriage for His Son, in that, by the mystery of the Incarnation, he united the Church to Him. The womb of the Virgin Mother was the nuptial-chamber of that Bridegroom, of whom the psalmists says: He hath set His tabernacle in the sun: and He, as a Bridegroom, cometh out of His bride-chamber.”[6] At a wedding the bride stays in the bridal room, with her bridesmaids and gets herself ready. The groom cannot see her. The groom also remains out of sight of the bride. There is great anticipation for both to come out of their rooms and meet. How much more so is the anticipation of the Incarnation, Jesus the Son of God, and coming from the chamber of the Theotokos (the God Bearer)! Jesus is the groom, Mary is the groom’s chamber and the Church is the bride. All of these truths are expressed in the Creed when we say, I believe in “Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord” and “Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary” and I believe in “The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.”

How can He marry all of us, each person? Jesus institutes the Church in which all the members are individual but as a

collective is one bride. As St. Paul writes, “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13) To have more than one Church is to have more than one bride, which is not possible. The love of Christ, in the tradition of the Church, has been portrayed many times by the mystics, who have had visions and dialogue with Jesus, the one they love and who loves them. Since we are a part of the Church, the words of Christ to the mystics are also addressed to us. In a vision to Saint Teresa of Avila Jesus said, “I would create the whole universe again, just to hear you say that you love me.”

MUSIC - David Crowder Band - How He Loves Us (Slideshow + Lyrics) - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:04

<http://youtu.be/GzfPHnoT0-0>

MUSIC – “Always” by Switchfoot – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:02

<http://youtu.be/bCyG9AIAi70>

These songs are emotional and speak about the love between two people. God’s love is so great that He gives us a way to share in that love. We see that God is the lover and Jesus is the beloved. In the mercy of God, Jesus becomes the lover and we the children of God become the beloved, as the Bride of Christ, the Church. It is because Jesus loves us so, that He instituted a Church in which all are invited. It is within this one Church that one banquet takes place, the banquet of the Mass, which is a share or taste in the banquet of Heaven. In a marriage the bride and groom become one and so “loving Christ is the same a loving the Church.”[7]

What does it mean to say that the Church is the “Bride of Christ”?[8]

Jesus Christ truly loves the Church as a bridegroom loves his bride. To love is to give of one’s self. He binds himself to her forever and gives his life for her. Anyone who has ever been in love has some idea of what love is. Jesus knows it and calls himself a bridegroom who lovingly and longingly courts his bride and desires to celebrate the feast of love with her. We are his Bride, the Church. In the Old Testament God’s love for his people is compared to the love between husband and wife. If Jesus seeks the love of each one of us, how often then unhappily

Spirit. We are already acknowledging that we are in need of the love of God, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. It is a reminder that we need to offer to God our thoughts (hand touches our head), words (hand touches our heart) and actions (hand touches our shoulders).

Greeting - The Lord be with you. And with your spirit

The priest (standing in the person of Christ) and the people (who are the Bride of Christ) greet and affirm each other’s role. In this first exchange the groom and bride are meeting at the wedding feast. The groom says, “The Lord be with you.” Because the Lord is with us, we are called. We are called to enter into the love and mystery of God and we are called to say yes to His will. The angel Gabriel greets Mary saying, “The Lord is with you.” The bride says back to the groom, “And with your spirit.” The bride is affirming the activity and power of the Holy Spirit at work within the Sacrament of the Priesthood. It is the priest, completely robed that “puts on Christ.” This greeting affirms the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation (The Lord is with you) and Holy Orders (and with your Spirit).

Confiteor and Kyrie – Contrition

In the Confiteor, we humble our self before God and acknowledge that although we are called to this feast we are not worthy to be present. We echo the words of the Gospel, “The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come.” We are invited but not worthy. What is the difference between those at Mass and those who ignore the invitation “and went away, one to his farm, another to his business”? Both groups are invited and both groups are unworthy. Only one group however accepts the invitation and admits they are unworthy and in need of mercy. It is at the Confiteor and Kyrie that we ask for contrition, saying we are unworthy and then begging for God’s Divine Mercy.

Gloria – Adoration and Thanksgiving

After expressing our contrition and asking for God’s mercy the Church explodes with the joyous Gloria, a prayer that we exclude during the penitential season of lent and during daily Masses. This Gloria is only sung during solemnities on weekdays and on Sundays outside of Lent. We sing the Gloria with an attitude of Adoration and Thanksgiving for what God has done for us. We once again return to the Blessed Trinity, in thanksgiving for the love of the Father, the saving Grace of the

your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.”[14]

How does the Mass help us to evangelize? In the following Eucharistic Prayer we say that we believe that Mass is the “saving banquet.” It is a banquet that we take seriously for the salvation of our souls and invite others to for the salvation of their soul. We also ask to be endowed with the Holy Spirit so that we will not be estranged or separated but united in communion with God and with our neighbor. It is the Mass that gives us the Grace necessary to love God and to love our neighbor. Not only is the Mass a “saving banquet” but it is also called the “unending banquet of unity.” The Mass saves and unites.

“Holy Father, we humbly beseech you to accept us also, together with your Son, and in this saving banquet graciously to endow us with his very Spirit, who takes away everything that estranges us from one another. May he make your Church a sign of unity and an instrument of your peace among all people and may he keep us in communion with N. our Pope and N. our Bishop and all the Bishops and your entire people. Just as you have gathered us now at the table of your Son, so also bring us together, with the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with your blessed Apostles and all the Saints, with our brothers and sisters and those of every race and tongue who have died in your friendship. Bring us to share with them the unending banquet of unity in a new heaven and a new earth, where the fullness of your peace will shine forth in Christ Jesus our Lord.”[15]

Is the Mass inviting? What is it inviting us to do? The very first part of Mass is called the Introductory Rite. In this Rite there are five parts. These five parts are a template of our prayer and get us ready to properly enter into the mystery of the Mass. The Introductory Rite takes about ten minutes and many times it may fly by or we may miss it if we are “running late.” We can’t overlook the important of these first ten minutes of the Mass. We can remember the different types of prayer, by remembering the word A.C.T.S. In prayer we adore, ask for contrition, give thanksgiving and ask our needs (supplication). All of these types of prayer are introduced within the Introductory Rite.

The Sign of the Cross

We begin our prayer, with a prayer. The Sign of the Cross is an act of Adoration of the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son and Holy

in love – that is to say, with all those who want nothing to do with his love and do not reciprocated it?

In what ways do we ignore our groom (Jesus) who loves us? Sin is an offense against God. **When is the king [God] offended in today’s Gospel?** He was offended and even enraged when the invited guests ignored him and went away and when they mistreated and killed his servants.

How can we have a greater love for the Church, the bride of Christ? We can obey her precepts; the ones that we love and respect we usually listen to and obey. **What are the precepts of the Church?** You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and remain free from work or activity that could impede the sanctification of such days. You shall confess your sins at least once a year. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during Easter season. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church. We can prepare and celebrate Her Sacraments. We can listen attentively to Her teachings. We can honor Her children, the Saints, the Holy Father, Bishops, Priests and all members of the Church. We can let others know about Her and what She can do for their lives.

The Mass: all are invited – Lesson and Discussion

“Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast”

In the Gospel we see a king and his Son. It is important that there is a king and Son. The king is the father who loves his son. We see the king (lover) and the son (beloved); the love between the two is the shared love. The wedding feast manifests the shared love; a love is so grand, that the king and son want others to partake in it. Saint Augustine describes the mystery of the Trinity as a lover, a beloved and the shared love between lover and beloved.[9] God is the lover. Jesus is the beloved. The love shared is so great that it is its own person, the Holy Spirit. We are called into this love. This lesson is lesson 3 of 3 and is focused on the Holy Spirit and how we are called into the love of God and then out of being called into that love desire to share it with others.

The Third Step is to evangelize. “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (John 15:13) The bride of Christ, the Church, is made up of those who having been called into the love of God and live in that love. As the bride

of Christ we desire to call others into that love and live in that love. We are like the servants who by our baptism are called to “Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.” We are at the service of this love and life, even when it costs us our life. How many countless missionaries gave up their physical life to go out into the main roads and invite people to the feast? How many countless others gave up their family, friends, homeland, jobs, etc. to go out into the main roads and invite people to the feast? The “main road” is not always a nice road, but rather a new world, jungles, arenas in which they would be martyred, the streets, the marketplace, the home. We proclaim in the Nicene Creed that we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to share this life and this love with everyone that we find, the “bad and good alike.”

Our calling as a Christian is to be faithful to our lover, Jesus Christ and to love as He loves. **Why do we love?** We love because we have first been loved. “We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must love his brother.” (1 John 4:19-21) Our vocation is to love God and love neighbor, but we could do neither if we were not first loved. Saint Therese the Little Flower summed it up when she said, “O Jesus, my love, at last I have found my calling: MY VOCATION IS LOVE! Certainly I have found my place in the Church, and you gave me that very place, my God. In the heart of the Church, my mother, I will be love, and thus I will be ALL things! MY VOCATION IS LOVE!”[10] Our place in the Church, as the bride of Christ is to love, to love our groom, to love our brothers and sisters in the Church and to love those whom we are inviting into the Church.

Where does the Holy Spirit come in to a parable that has to do with a Father and a Son? The Father is the lover, and the son is the beloved. The Holy Spirit is the shared love between the lover and the beloved. The Holy Spirit guides the Church in spirit and in truth according to Jesus’ promise at the Last Supper, “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.” (John 16:13) The Holy Spirit is one with the Church and through the Sacraments dwells within each Christian. The Holy Spirit is the shared love between Father and Son that continues to be shared with the Son and His Bride the

Church. It is this shared love of the Holy Spirit that the Church invites the world to partake of. The Church continues to echo the words of Saint Paul, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with all of you.” (2 Corinthians 13:13) These words summarize this whole packet. We are called to the Trinitarian life, to experience the love of God, the grace of Jesus and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

These words are said at the very beginning of our most important prayer, the Mass. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”[11] This love of God, grace of Jesus and communion of the Holy Spirit is shared in many ways. This sharing includes the unlimited gifts of Grace, including the Sacraments, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The greatest of these gifts is the Mass, in which we receive our Groom, Jesus Christ not just spiritually but physically in the Eucharist.

Do we believe that it is a blessing to go to Mass? Do we feel honored to be invited to Mass? The Mass is the wedding feast, which the Father gave the Son and at which the Son and bride unite. At the Mass we say, “Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.”[12] Do we believe this? If we do believe this we will be willing to give all in order to call other to this supper.

When does the wedding feast take place? The catechism says that it takes place “this day” the “this day” that we pray in the Our Father when we say, “Give us this day our daily bread.” “This day is the Day of the Lord, the day of the feast of the kingdom, anticipated in the Eucharist that is already the foretaste of the kingdom to come. For this reason it is fitting for the Eucharistic liturgy to be celebrated each day.”[13] It is also fitting that the feast of the kingdom is not only offered each day, but until the end of time so that the “hall” spoke of in the Gospel is open in many guests. The Mass is not only our portal into becoming the bride of Christ; it is also our portal to Heaven. A portal is a door. It is if at Mass the door is slightly opened and we peer through the crack in the door to the greatness within. We are with the Angels and Saints we experience a foretaste of heaven. This is why we pray, “And so, with the Angels and all the Saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of