

Read

Isaiah 25:6-10a

Psalm 23:1-3a,
3b-4, 5, 6

Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

Matthew 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

LIVING THE WORD

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 11, 2020



REFLECTION

Have you ever been invited to a party and forgot about it? The day of the party arrives, and you have done nothing to prepare for it—you haven't bought a gift, you haven't picked out an outfit, you don't have the directions, all those kinds of things? Preparing our hearts to be with God for all our life is much like preparing for a party. We need to make certain that we are ready to be with God. The Church has given us gifts that allow us to experience God's grace in a very real, tangible way. The sacraments are God's way of inviting us to continually prepare to be in relationship with God and with one another. Every time we participate in the sacraments, we are replying "yes" to God's invitation into his heavenly kingdom. At this point in your lives, you have probably only participated in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation. Out of these four, only the Eucharist and Reconciliation can be repeated—they help to heal our wounds of sin and put us in communion with the rest of the Body of Christ. When we sin, we are rejecting God's invitation. When we participate in these sacraments, we are telling God that we want to be transformed and accept his grace once again.

ACTION

Reflect on the sacraments that you have received throughout your life up to this point. Which one has had the most impact on your life? Prepare to go to Mass this week by going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Prepare for that sacrament by spending time in prayer, examining your conscience, reflecting on when you have accepted and rejected God's invitation to follow him.



Learn more about the
Sacrament of Reconciliation:
[http://www.usccb.org/prayer
-and-worship/sacraments
-and-sacramentals/penance
/index.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/index.cfm)

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What does it mean to you to accept God's invitation to his heavenly banquet?
- ❖ Do you help to extend God's invitation to others through your actions?



October 11, 2020

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #142A

Isaiah 25:6-10a

Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

Matthew 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Jesus continues to use parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus tells the story of a king who is hosting a wedding banquet for his son. When no one will accept the king's invitation, he becomes very angry. He then sends his servants out again to invite anyone they come in contact with to the feast, and many attend. This helps us to better understand the Kingdom of God because God invites everyone, the good and the bad, into his Kingdom, but some people turn their backs on God. The invitation is freely given, but it is up to us to accept the invitation and follow Jesus.

Q FOCUS: *God's invitation into his Kingdom is extended to all people.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week, we celebrate the memorial of St. Teresa of Ávila (October 15). St. Teresa lived during the sixteenth century, during a time of great changes in political, social, religious structures. She joined a Carmelite convent and was a reformer of the order and helped others to find a deeper connection to Christ. She was a deeply spiritual person and we can learn from her life of prayer through her writings. She is a Doctor of the Church.

Church Teaching Connection

"The Son, accordingly, came, sent by the Father, who before the foundation of the world chose us and predestined us in him to be his adopted sons and daughters. For it is in him that it pleased the Father to restore all things (see [Ephesians] 1:4-5 and 10). To carry out the will of the Father, Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed his mystery to us; by his obedience he brought about the redemption. The church—that is, the kingdom of Christ already present in mystery—grows visibly in the world through the power of God" (*Lumen gentium*, 3).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 22:1-10

Reader:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

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."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Our lives are extremely busy today. You might be part of teams, bands, or choirs. You are involved in clubs, and of course, there is also your homework that you must complete and stay on top of. Not only are you overcommitted sometimes in these areas of your life, but perhaps you feel as though you are overcommitted in your social life as well. You are invited to many parties and gatherings of friends, not to mention family parties and events. Sometimes, it all feels so overwhelming, and you are tempted to say "no," and refuse to continue running in this rat race.

In today's Gospel, we hear another parable from Jesus. Once again, he is talking to the chief priests and elders. He continues to explain to them the concept of God's Kingdom.

In this parable, Jesus likens God's Kingdom to a wedding feast to which many guests are invited. The king, who invites the guests, expects the people to respond with gratitude and grace, accepting the invitation and attending the feast. Instead, those who

are invited decline and, in fact, are very mean to the messengers who are sent to invite them.

► Describe a time that you declined an invitation to a party or social event. Why did you decline, and do you regret not attending? How did the host take the news that you would not be attending?

The king cannot understand why the guests do not want to attend the wedding feast for his son. We have felt like that before. We extend a kindness, an invitation- we try to include someone else, and in turn, they decline to attend or deny the kindness. It can be very hurtful. The king was very upset that the invited guests ignored the invitation, some refused to come, others acted as if they had more important tasks to attend to. The king became so angry that he destroyed those who had wronged him and burned their cities.

► Has a friend refused to join you at a party or at a social event? Has your teammate or bandmate chosen to skip practice or a game or concert? How did this make you feel?

The king then sends his servants one more time. It is here that we learn what the kingdom of heaven is really about. The king tells his servants to invite anyone and everyone to attend the feast, the good and the bad. The servants did as they were told, and soon, the hall was filled with guests. Jesus demonstrates that God's Kingdom is available to all people, the saints and the sinners, as long as they accept God's invitation to join God and to follow God's will. God is constantly seeking us out, wanting us to participate in God's life, but some of us refuse this gift. We turn our backs on it. However, when we accept God's invitation, we accept our identity as those belonging to God. We are given many opportunities every day to accept God's invitation time and again.

► What are some ways that you can accept God's invitation to the Kingdom?

► How do your actions show others that you have accepted this invitation?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 42.

Jesus uses parables to help others understand what the Kingdom of God is like.

The invitation to enter the Kingdom of God is extended to all people.

We can either accept or reject God's invitation to share in his eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

Act on the Word

A Simple Meal Can Be a Banquet

You will need to organize the follow service opportunity ahead of time.

In today's Gospel reading, we learned that the kingdom of heaven is like a wedding feast at which everyone is welcome. God invites all into his Kingdom, yet society does not always treat everyone as honored guests at God's table. Organize a service opportunity for the teens to make sandwiches for a local homeless shelter. Contact one that your parish supports or a similar ministry. Many organizations will accept

these sandwiches and then distribute them to their clients or the homeless in the areas they serve. Though it is usually a simple meal of things like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and chips, this can make a difference in someone's day who has no other source of food. Before or after preparing the food, discuss with the teens the importance of recognizing everyone's human dignity. Talk about different ways they can do this (like doing service projects). Finally, reflect on how today's Gospel relates to your service activity.

Closing Prayer

*Lord our God,
you have called us to the marriage-supper
of the Lamb.*

*May we come to the feast with open hearts,
clothed in Christ and ready to do your will.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.