



Immaculate Conception  
Church

Homily for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A 2014

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It's a strange Gospel, isn't it?

The king prepares a feast and sends everyone out to gather people to come....but they don't want to. So he becomes upset and then goes and asks other people to come. They don't do any better...if fact, they're worse. They beat and kill the king's messengers. Finally the king is enraged and tells his servants to go out and just grab anyone along the way and bring them in. So now the dining room is full and the king finds someone who isn't dressed properly...so he throws him out. What's the point of all of this? Is there a point?

The answer is "yes." There is a very serious point to this story, this parable of God's kingdom. To begin with it is based on the protocol of marriages in first century Palestine. For in that time invitations were sent out much earlier than the actual feast ... don't we do the same thing? But what was different is that instead of giving place and time and a clear schedule, the invitation stated that someone would come to get the person invited and bring them to the festivities when all was ready.

So these people that the king sent out to be fetched were individuals who were "invited" to be at the feast. And when these people dishonored their acceptance of the king's hospitality, the king expanded his warmth and invited the next group of people. And the king kept going because of his generous love. But that generous love demanded a certain protocol of respect... a certain way of dressing that one person failed to observe. And so that person lost his place at the celebration.

All of us have been invited to the Feast of God's love...to the kingdom of God's mercy and tenderness. Again and again God invites us to come to the Feast. And like the king in the story, everyone is invited to God's Feast, to God's kingdom. But accepting this invitation...coming to this Feast...means that we respond to God by the way we love and the way we act. The garment that we wear to God's kingdom, is the garment woven by the acts of mercy, forgiveness, compassion and understanding that we bring to others.

The message of this parable is simple. God's love is freely given to each one of us so that we might in turn freely give our love and compassion to each other. God invites us to come to His Feast and to celebrate those things in life that really do make a difference... compassion, forgiveness, concern, faith, hope and above all...love. Without these the kingdom of God is hollow and empty. Without these we fail to be the children that God calls to be His kingdom here on earth.