

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time - A -2020
Isa.25.6-10///Phil.4.12-14/19-20///Matt. 22.1-14

→have you ever noticed the many choices we have these days....there are more activities, games and apps just to make a simple phone work than ever before.

→sometimes when I'm out to eat, I feel like my head is going to explode just ordering dinner because it requires a multitude of choices.....french fries, home fries, mashed, squashed, baked, roasted, pierced, skewed, or cooked potatoes,

---soup, salad, vegetables, coleslaw, pickles, or God forbid...cottage cheese

→wheat, rye, white, or whole....sliced, cut, sticks or just a plain old big loaf

→Italian, French, ranch, thousand island, low-fat, balsamic, blue cheese, or sweet and sour....

→...diet, regular, white, orange, red, decaf, sweet tea, raspberry, tea...and dare I ever mention all the kinds of beer....

→you get the point...[if anything good came from this pandemic is that in some instances our choices have been reduced]

→regardless however, it seems as if these days...we have more options, choices, possibilities, and varieties than we could ever need.

→Henry Ford, in the early years of the Model A, was fond of telling his customer they could have any color car they wanted as long as it was "black"

→because at that time...choices were fewer and the canvas of life was mostly black-and-white

→and so, consider for just a moment, that maybe....just maybe.....the multitude of choices we have these days for almost everything and anything can really be overwhelming at times..... *PAUSE*

→coincidentally...I think it was this kind of situation Jesus had in mind...when he speaks the parable we just heard in today's gospel reading.

→because even way back then...his listeners had a choice to make...

→to either accept God's invitation to be his chosen people....to be his special guests....or not.....

→[and] when Jesus announces that banquet was ready to happen...we find that some decide to reject and not choose to accept this invitation...

→and so we hear at the end of the story...that *many are invited...but as a result only few are chosen.*"

→like all of the parables Jesus told...there is a multiplicity of meanings in each of his stories and this one is no different.

→on the surface there is the literal meaning..... a wedding banquet takes place and when the invited guests don't show up the king replaces them with substitute guests....

→there is also the intended meaning...behind the story

→taking a closer look....we realize that the King really stands for God

→the wedding feast....represents the kingdom...

→and the invited guests are God's chosen people....and the substitute guests....well those are the sinners of Jesus' time who had the insight and awareness to accept and embrace the message of Jesus...

→and finally...there is the interpreted meaning of the story

→i.o.w....the meaning it holds for us today.....

→and that is...the choice that we all need to consider and make for ourselves....

→a choice to either follow and accept Jesus Christ and his message into our lives...and live it or not.....

PAUSE

→when we were baptized and confirmed...that invitation was given to all of us ...we became HIS guests and the feast of life was laid out before us...

→and from that moment on...the challenge before us has always been.....how do WE continue to answer this invitation...what kind of response do we give and what kind of reply do we offer

→by our baptism....all of us have said “yes”....to the invitation

→and now comes the duty and obligation to live up to....to carry out....that “yes” for the rest of our lives. *-PAUSE-*

→it’s very similar to the “I DO” of marriage

→when you think about it...the “I DO” of marriage doesn’t end the invitation to be married but rather it’s only the beginning....

→so too...our commitment to God...and to our faith can’t simply be a one-time event but rather it has to be something that continues to grow and develop within us and through us.

→and it is for this very reason that our celebration here each week...the celebration of Mass...of the Eucharist, of listening and hearing the Word of God, of sharing the bread and wine and being with each other is so vitally important and essential to our well-being...to our growth...and to our relationship with Jesus Christ

→many have said that during the time of suspension of Mass...that there was a certain feeling of emptiness in life...and how true that was

→because what we do **right here** is a crucial part of our existence...not just on Sunday but every day of our lives...

→.....this isn't just an hour long event in the long list of things to do on our schedules...rather this HERE....is a very real and sincere part of our entire life...

→because if it's not...then are we really any better than those invited guests who refused to come to the feast

→our presence here each and every week is important....under the current circumstances being here involves a choice...a decision...and a certain level of risk....I would like to thank you for your confidence and dedication....your conviction and faith....[because]...in the midst of all that is going on...it is good for us to be here

PAUSE

→I began by pointing out all the different kind of choices we make in life....

→we choose our mates, our homes, our cars, our clothes...

→we get to choose, where, what and when to eat...as well as when sleep, work, play and rest...

→but of all the choices we can make for ourselves...from salad dressing to the color of our hair.....

→this choice...the decision to be with Christ...to follow Christ...to live as Christ desires us to live....is the choice that matters the most....

→and it is the most important choice we can make...not only for today...but for every day for the rest of our lives.