

# Living the Gospel in Everyday Life....



28th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
October 9, 2011  
Matthew 22:1-14



## What's Going On Here?

**GOSPEL:** 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. But when the king came in to meet the 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."

**OPEN HOUSE: R.S.V.P.** What were the invited guests thinking?! Invited by the king! It is the king himself who made everything ready. Surely they'd heard about his parties - only the best food, wine, musicians and entertainment; a great opportunity for networking with so many people. Could they really have been too busy? Busy about what? Sunday after Sunday we have witnessed Matthew's confrontations with the Jewish leaders who miss the point of their covenant with God and reject both the message of love and the one who calls them to live it. Are they, like the invited guests, too busy? Are they preoccupied? Too involved in their own thing? Too important? Or do they know deep-down that, although the invitation is free, the king has standards? Maybe *their* preparation for the feast would demand more than they were willing to give. Maybe even the thought of full participation in so lush a banquet was overwhelming. Maybe they were afraid to even try to picture the joy of being in the presence of one so generous and loving. Imagine being so afraid of love that they would attack the ones who invite them to the feast. Those who attend the wedding feast are the ones who live on the margins; they are the poor, the disenfranchised. What do they have to lose? They already have nothing and so they are unencumbered by their possessions, their self-importance, and their agendas. They see the invitation for what it is, freely given and offered to all. They are hungry and thirsty, not only for food and drink, but for acceptance and participation. The humiliation delivered upon them by their oppressors becomes the humility of the necessary wedding garment, and they are welcomed into the banquet hall. Love is the order of the day. Come to the feast.

## Questions For Reflection

\* Have I ever prepared a party and waited for guests who didn't show up? How did that feel?

\* Have I ever received an invitation that I didn't open, only to find it later, after the event had happened? What was that like?

\* Have I ever delayed responding to an invitation, just to keep my options open? Or said yes, then not show up?

\* What is God's invitation to me, right now, right here, in this time of my life? What is my response?

\* How does it feel to know that our loving God has prepared a banquet for us in heaven? Why would I not say yes?