

## Homily for the 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, A, October 11, 2020

Did you ever wonder what heaven will be like? I know I have! Saint Paul gives us this thought today: *“Eye has not seen ear has not heard what God has ready for those who love him.”* If that seems like a cop-out today's readings give us the image of heaven as a **banquet** not once, but three times: in Isaiah, Psalm 2 and the Gospel.

Isaiah says: *“On God's holy mountain, God will provide a banquet of rich juicy fruit and vintage wine.”* For the people living in exile in Babylon this was quite a dream, that is, to be back home in their beloved Holy Land, enjoying the love of God pictured in the great banquet celebration. Psalm 22 says; *“You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.”*

In today's gospel Jesus uses almost the same image but makes it even better for he says the banquet is a royal wedding. Surprisingly, people use all kinds of excuses not to attend, so that others are then invited to come to the wedding. This parable seems a bit far-fetched as who would be foolish enough to turn down a royal wedding? But people are funny! They use all kinds of flimsy excuses to avoid doing the right thing all the time -- don't we do that sometimes, too! For example: I know there is a text or letter I should email or fax but I think I'll do it tomorrow but never do it. I know I should spend more time in prayer but don't, because I think God knows what I want anyway ... or I ponder about doing wrong and dishonest things and rationalize it by thinking everybody does this -- e.g. ... I know I drink too much but I have a lot of tension in my life ... or I know I tend to hold grudges but think I was right and he/she was wrong, etc. etc.

Excuses, excuses, excuses! Remember the old adage: **The road to hell is paved with good intentions!** Spiritual directors tell us the greatest danger in the spiritual life is not that we might abandon God and turn

to evil but rather that we just ignore God's invitations altogether. This leads to indifference, thinking it doesn't really matter. Indifferent people are the hardest to motivate to change

Let me tell you a story it's an old Irish one. Once upon a time there was a tailor in a little town who mended the clothes of everybody in his village, yet he, himself went around in tattered clothes. To the embarrassment of everyone, the tailor even went to church on Sunday dressed the same way, wearing the same tattered suitcoat. *(I told you this was an old story no one seemed to get dressed up very much for Sunday Mass anymore, too bad!)* The tailor responded: "What can I do?" "Look" said his friend: "Here is \$20." However, when the friend came to church the next Sunday, he saw the tailor wearing the same old raggedy coat. Extremely annoyed at him, the friend said: "Didn't I give you \$20 last week to mend your coat? Yet, I see you didn't even touch it with a needle." "What can I do?" the tailor said apologetically! "When I went home last Sunday and examined my coat, I realized I would lose money on this job if I did it for only \$20."

The moral of this story is we are all a bit like this, we will look for any excuse for our behavior. I am reminded of the words of Saint Paul: "The good that I want to do, I do not ... the evil I wish not to do, that I do."

So let's look at ourselves. Are we not invited to live our faith deeply? We know God has been good to each of us and God simply asks us to imitate His love in return, by loving Him and our neighbor but do we? Think about the excuses we all make in life and **what possible excuses are we going to give to the Lord on judgment day?**