

## Homily by Fr. Anthony Davis

**“Only the faithful have reserved seats”.**

October 11, 2020

28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Is 25:6-10; Phil 4:12-14.19-20; Mt 22:1-14

Today's first reading and gospel give us a beautiful picture of what it is we are praying for when we say, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done". God's will is for our *complete, decent, and eternal, spiritual life*. Our gospel warns us, however, that in order to be part of God's beautiful plan, we need to respond to the invitation he offers us, because only the faithful have reserved seats.

Yes, we are baptized members of the Catholic Christian community, but we may tend to equate baptism with final salvation. We are mature Christian adults through confirmation, but we may stunt our growth through lack of persistence/determination despite all odds. We promise to be faithful to other people in marriage, jobs, religious life, Priesthood and so on, yet we may act as if the promise without performance, assures lasting union with God and his community. But remember, only the faithful have reserved seats!

What am I trying to say today? But for this "slow down" due to this global pandemic (COVI-19) we are here in our lovely country, all work and business, eyes glued to sales charts and ears anchored to cell phones. We are busily engaged in the necessary pursuits that the modern economy demands of us in the staples of life. But these staples are pushing so many of us believers into the trap of being "SO BUSY MAKING A LIVING THAT WE FAIL TO MAKE A LIFE".

Our priorities may have slowly changed from what they once were. So have the staples become our priorities? And are we so busy making a living that we no longer have a decent spiritual life? Indeed, we know a degree of job satisfaction and financial satisfaction and football satisfaction and vacation satisfaction, but perhaps we feel in our bones that we are only living on the surface of the real meaning of life. *Something is very wrong. Something is missing.*

This is because we no more experience that deep inner joy of the Christian who sits with Christ at the wedding feast. Yes, hard and genuine work gives satisfaction. Life gives pleasures-no doubt about it. But the kingdom of God gives the anchoring gift of inner peace and joy. However, "Only the faithful have the reserved seats".

Consequently, there are many "Spiritual Casualties" in our modern world. By this I mean many one-time believers have lost the Lord's wedding feast invitation entirely. Some of us haven't

yet, but we may be giving an ever-receding back seat to the kingdom of God in our lives. Perhaps we feel in our bones that we are only living on the surface of the real meaning of life. We feel very empty!

Hence, we need to be grateful to Christ for the invitation to the Heavenly banquet. In other words, from the moment of our Baptism, we have been invited to the Heavenly banquet and provided with the wedding garment of sanctifying grace. These great privileges and blessings are freely given to us by a loving God.

But the same obstacles which prevented the Pharisees from entering the Kingdom – i.e. pride, love of this world, and inordinate desire for its wealth and its pleasures – can impede us too. In short, the parable warns us that membership in a Church alone does not guarantee our eternal salvation.

Therefore, let us ask God for the gift of deep inner joy in our lives. It is the “wedding garment” of those who know how to celebrate at the king’s feast. Indeed, work gives satisfaction. Life gives pleasure. But the kingdom of God gives the anchoring gift of inner peace and joy. That’s why we should always remember that only the faithful have the reserved seats.