

THE PROPER SPIRITUAL GARMENT AT HIS TABLE

This Sunday first Reading taken from ISAIAH 25:6-10 tells us about our Father-God who is so LOVING and GENEROUS that He desires to invite and gather all peoples from all nations to a grandiose banquet.

We may be familiar with this particular Reading, as it is one of the favourite ones at funeral Masses. It speaks in fact of an ongoing joyful celebration: "tears will be wiped away from all faces" and "death will be no more".

Such is God's promise and our Christian belief about Heaven.

We all know that it is an honour to be invited as a guest at a wedding celebration, and that unless one is very sick, we would not dream of turning down an invitation.

Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew 22:1-14, tells the story of a King who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to remind those in the guest list that everything is ready, and for them to come. Surprisingly they refuse to go. Though the refusal infuriated the King, he does not give up. He wants to fill the banquet hall for his son's wedding. And so he sends his servants once again to invite as many people they can find, people from various backgrounds and nationality, good and bad.

In real life, God desires everyone to be part of His Family, the Church, and invites them to the Eucharistic banquet of His Son.

But there is one important detail in the Gospel story: just as whenever we are invited guests at a wedding, we dress up and put on our best suit, so also whenever we approach to receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we need to wear the garment of being "in a state of grace", that means our soul has to be free of any attachment to sin, cleansed and purified in the sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession.

In fact, in the story Jesus says that the King noticed that a man was not wearing the wedding robe, and said to him: "Friend, how did you get in here without a "wedding robe"? Then King had the speechless man thrown out of the banquet hall. Just because he had been invited, the man was not exempted from wearing the proper wedding garment and showing "respect".

WHAT ABOUT YOU? - DO YOU SHOW REVERENCE AND RESPECT TO JESUS BY APPROACHING THE EUCHARISTIC TABLE PROPERLY PREPARED AND WEARING THE GARMENT OF GRACE IN YOUR SOUL?