
9 Sunday

28th SUNDAY of the YEAR

Isaiah 25: 6-10

Ps 22: 1-6

Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

Matt. 22: 1 - 14

Banquets, feasts and ordinary meals feature quite a lot in the gospels, and indeed in the bible as a whole. It's remarkable how many important incidents of Jesus' life and His teaching take place in the context of a meal, most notably of course His last supper. His stories and parables too, like today's gospel, are often related to banquets and celebrations where people eat together. The communal sharing of joy and of the rich good things of the earth make a strong symbol of the family togetherness of God's household and kingdom. But it seems not everybody wants to accept the Father's invitation.

For Isaiah (today's prophetic reading), the feast of rich foods and wines on the mountain of the Lord is also a sign of the Lord's triumph over all the sufferings, dangers and evils that beset God's people, that afflict humanity. Every tear of those who wait patiently for the Lord will be wiped away. Isaiah's vision, for hungry people who don't have much, is a delight to be cherished.

In 'developed' societies today we have such abundance of exotic fruits, foods, wines and good things from around the world, and at the same time a culture of fast food and rushed eating. Have we lost appreciation for the earth's riches that we share, a sense of the symbolism of taking part in a celebration feast? When we pray for our "daily bread", what do we really mean? And how does it happen that the fruits of our earth (and its food) are not shared equally and fairly? Where's our wedding garment?