

**TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**Year A     October 12, 2014**

**Theme: Guests at a Royal Wedding**

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Who refuses an invitation to a **royal wedding**?

Who misses chance to **eat** the king's finest food and **drink** from the royal wine cellar for free and to **hobnob** with the best and the brightest, the celebs and the stars of the kingdom?

Just politically, who RSVPs to the king: *"Oh no, I think I'll go to my farm that day or I'm going to work instead"?*

And when the king sent a servant around with **a friendly reminder** that it was time for the great feast – the veal was roasted, the wine decanted, the band was tuning up -- the invited guests, manhandled one of the servants, beat another and even killed a third.

Now that's going to make the father of the groom real happy.

But not letting anything ruin the feast of his son, the king sent other servants out to **gather anyone they could find and invite them** into the feast until the palace was rocking.

Now comes the part of Jesus parable that **my own father**, God rest his soul almost a year now, would always ask me about:

The king made his rounds of the guests and found a guy who did not have on a **"wedding garment."**

When this guy refused even to explain this **breech of protocol**, the royal host had him thrown out and tortured.

Dad would always ask: “The guy never wanted to go to the reception in the first place. Why then did he get thrown out for not wearing a tux?”

After I had some bible study under my belt I was able to explain to dad that it some scholars believe it was customary at a fancy, royal wedding like this for the wealthy host to **supply every guest** with a brand new wedding outfit for the banquet.

It's was something like certain races or fund raising events today when you get **a free tee-shirt** for participating.

The guest who was thrown out had **arrogantly, boorishly refused** to put on the outfit supplied by the king's generosity.

Just like last week, Jesus in Matthew's Gospel addressed this parable of the King's Wedding Feast for his Son to the **“chief priests and elders of the people.”**

Thus, Jesus and Matthew and the Early Church, apparently understood the Jewish leadership to be **those who rejected God's invitation** to the Kingdom, that is, the wedding feast of his Son.

Ultimately, this leadership in collaboration with the Romans would put Jesus to death.

What the Early Church experienced, however, was when those originally invited refused the invitation, God then sent his servants out and **opened the doors of the Kingdom** – that is, the Wedding Feast – to everyone.

And this is where you and I enter the parable picture: **we are among those who have now been welcomed** into the stupendous wedding feast of the King's, God's, Son!

When those who were invited refused, God sent his servants – the Apostles like our patron Paul – out to **proclaim the invitation to others**, to the Gentiles, to those who did not know of God and God's mercy and goodness.

So what we might ask? So what difference does this make to our everyday lives in this world: it's a cute story but so what?

Well, first of all, we are on the guest list for the Wedding Feast of God's Son so let's live accordingly!

Thanks to the Father's generosity, we have been summoned to the heavenly wedding hall where we will meet that Father and his Son;

---we are going to sit at heavenly banquet table and share, as Isaiah prophesied, **"its feast of juicy rich food and pure choice wines."**

---we are going to dance for eternity to the music of the stars because, again in Isaiah's word, **"The Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face...he will destroy death forever."**

But remember the fellow who wouldn't wear the wedding garment?

This isn't a free ride.

In response to God's generosity and in preparation for the life to come, we must put on virtue and righteousness, compassion and morality, justice and charity.

We cannot enter the Wedding Feast of the Son without making some effort to be clothed in such goodness.

So let's put on that wedding garment, that robe given to us at baptism, and come to the Feast.

Come, eat bread and wine without paying or cost!

Come to the feast where there will be no more tears and no more death!

Come, we are guests at the wedding feast of the Son of God!

