

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Matthew (*Matthew 22:1-7*) The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’ “But they paid no attention and went off - one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ Missing the Higher Calling

External noise – Attachment to earthly things. Whilst those who failed to come to the royal wedding banquet were involved in legitimate activities of their daily lives, it does not detract from the fact that they failed to recognize or ignored a higher calling. They were weighed down with their work or their desire to make as much money as possible. With money, nothing is ever enough. A certain rich, earnest young man asked Jesus what he needed to do in order to inherit eternal life. Jesus asked him to sell all his belongings and follow Him. It was in fact a very special invitation from Jesus, issued to very few. However, the young man went away sad because he had many possessions (cf. Matthew 19:16-22). Thus, Jesus said we are to have only one master.

External noise – Involvement in too many trivial activities that bear no eternal value. Ours is a busy world. Even a primary school student is involved in a myriad of activities outside the long school hours. Outside work, young adults are busy in pleasure-seeking or amusement activities. Other more serious ones are busy investing their time in study or other self-advancement activities that will enhance their chance of material success in this world. To Martha who complained to the Lord that Mary was not helping her with the many household chores, Jesus said, “*Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed...*” (cf. Luke 10:41-42).

Internal noise – A crowded, divided heart. A heart that is driven by self-pride, disorderly self-love or weighed down with anxieties of this life will have no interest to respond to a calling to live a life of holy love and selflessness. In such souls, the eyes of faith are blinded. The heart is hardened by unrepented sin and the conscience darkened by pursuit of self interest. Such a soul will only be interested in his benefit or profit in any given situation. Accordingly, the doctrine of Christ will be folly to such a soul. Thus Christ crucified is a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:23).

Internal noise: Not wanting to change due to a lack of faith and a heart hardened by unrepented sins: *Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil (John 3:19). Jesus said: “Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me (Matthew 16:24).* Denial of self and change involves discomfort and suffering. Focusing on this alone and totalling being forgetful or ignorant of God’s helping and saving grace and their eternal crown of glory that awaits them in heaven, results in many taking the easy and wide road that leads to perdition.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for calling me to be Your disciple to live a life of grace. With all my heart I embrace this wondrous gift and Your call to participate in Your mission. Through the grace of my Baptism and Confirmation You have invited me to share Your ministry as priest, prophet and king and to be part of establishing Your Kingdom here on earth. Fill me with the light, love, joy and power of Your Holy Spirit so that I can go forth together with You to proclaim the Truth of Your Word to my brothers and sisters around me by my words and how I live my life. United to Your Sacred Heart I ardently desire that each soul be assured of a place in Your glorious kingdom. Through the heart of Mary I offer You all my sufferings, sorrows, my entire self as a gift to You to help save all souls especially unrepentant ones. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, pray for us. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.