

## 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

My beloved brothers and sisters, ingratitude is the substance of every sin, it separates us from God, and from a meaningful life that flows from Him. The beginning of gratitude is to recognize our blessings. The second step of gratitude is to acknowledge them coming from the hand of our loving God, our Father. The third step of living a meaningful and joyful life, is to act upon them! A life lived in gratitude is the way of living in the core of the heart and mind of Jesus. It is so important, that it is the root of the first four commandments: to worship and adore God, speaking of the Lord with reverence and keep the Sabbath Holy, and recognizing that God is the center of family life! If we live in this spirit of Gratitude, then the Mass is the perfect expression of that spirit; and our worshipful presence here, is the celebration of the Divine Wedding Feast of the Son of God and His people.

In the ancient world, many invitations to a wedding feast were sent out, first to notify everyone; and secondly, because there was no refrigeration, to let everyone invited know that the preparations were complete and they should now respond! There was no excuse for the wedding guests to not come, because, implied in the first part of the story, they had already been invited. The acceptance of the invitation was a dishonor to the king who invited them. Abusing the kings messengers was to reject him and to declare war against him; as a result, they cut themselves off from his kindness and put themselves into jeopardy.

The second part of the story, is the magnificent generosity of the king, who then invites everyone into the Royal Wedding Feast, and provides everything they need for the festival, including the wedding garments. One person shows up clothed in his regular street clothing, and his disrespect of the King and the Kings son are evident in his attitude. It gets him thrown out of the feast!

My beloved brothers and sisters, everyone of us has been invited into the Divine Wedding Banquet, which is the nuptial feast of the Son of God and His beloved bride, the Church! God even provides us with all that we need to come and enter; however, God also respects our human free-will to reject His offer. God has even

clothed us with His Wedding Garment, His Divine Love and Grace; however, we are expected to come to Him properly clothed, with the proper attitude and behavior. To fail to do so has awful consequences. God our Loving Father wants to clothe us in His peace and Grace; but, if someone refuses to accept the invitation, they have cut themselves off from His goodness.

So what is the way to properly respond? We respond by living lives of gratitude centered in the heart, mind and soul of Jesus, by living in Him, and by responding to His generosity with serving Him and His beloved people!