



THE BANQUET OF LIFE

This is a difficult parable. The storyline is highly improbable. When the wedding preparations are far advanced, the king breaks off to go and fight a war. Later when he invites servants to bring in people off the street, he is angry that they are not appropriately dressed. Who goes around the streets dressed for a wedding banquet?

Yet in some ways this is a parable for our time, a time when so many are deaf to the possibility that God might be inviting them to a fuller life. There are many attractive things in our world today. We can fill our lives with the pleasures of possessions, power, sex, status and other things that this world offers. There is so much around us, apparently within easy reach, that many feel no need to look to God. Indeed, it has always been so. Many years ago, the North African bishop St Augustine spent many years of his life searching for meaning and satisfaction in the pleasures of this world, steadfastly refusing to look to God, or to the word of God, to find the answer to his search for happiness. Later he would describe his attitude to the gospels in this

way: 'I had too much conceit to accept their simplicity and not enough insight to penetrate their depths. It is surely true that as the child grows these books grow with him. But I was too proud to call myself a child. I was inflated with self-esteem, which made me think of myself as a great man.' *Confessions* 3.5

Augustine was in his early thirties when his attitude towards the word of God changed and thus a new phase in his life began. This can be summed up in his own words, 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord,

and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.'

The parable describes the blessings that God wants to give us as a wedding banquet: a feast with the best of food and drink, a joyful meal where all are gathered in friendship, celebration and gratitude. This image is not just a description of heaven but also a picture of the Christian community on earth when we are at our best. Think of times in your life when your experience of being a part of the Christian community was a 'banquet' experience - when you had the sense of being at one with others in thanksgiving to God and in a spirit of service to others.

— John Byrne, OSA

Reflection

What has reminded you that a full life needs more than the pleasures of this world?

Lesson

This day is a new gift from God. How will we choose to live it?

Prayer

The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want. ...

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. (Ps 23)



ADD ANOTHER STITCH

God our Father invites us all to his great wedding feast in heaven! In living out our married life, we have been making our wedding garment! It is woven, sewn and stitched with all the little acts of loving kindness, long forgotten, the courtesies in every little action we show toward each other, our children, family and friends.

— Marriage Matters

www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk

This Week (12–18 October)

- 12 M St Wilfrid, bishop
- 13 T St Edward the Confessor
- 14 W St Callistus I, pope and martyr
- 15 T St Teresa of Avila, virgin and doctor
- 16 F St Hedwig; St Margaret Mary Alacoque
- 17 S St Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
- 18 S 29th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

