

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

PARTY INVITATION

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Reflecting on the Gospel

Parable of invitations to the wedding (Matthew 22:1-14)

In chapter 22 Matthew is still preparing his readers for the crucifixion and for an interpretation of that momentous event. Today he does so through the parable of the invitations to the wedding. Through the imagery of the Old Testament, the wedding feast had become an established symbol for the age of the Messiah. This parable spells out how the people originally invited (the people of Israel) had declined the invitation. Therefore, God will invite others to the table.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *party invitation*.

Extracts from the Gospel passage (Matthew 22: 1-5)

Once more Jesus spoke to the chief priests and Pharisees in parables, saying:

‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.

He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come.

Again he sent other slaves, saying, “Tell those who have been invited:

Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.”

But they made light of it and went away.’

Gospel prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you invite us to your table.
Give us grace to accept your invitation,
that we may sit and eat with you in your kingdom;
for you are our God.
Amen.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME

Reflecting and meditating

Reflect on the parable of the invitation to the wedding in Matthew 22: 1-14:

- what details in the passage catch your attention?
- what big ideas does the passage spark in your mind?
- what most touches your heart in the passage?
- what most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage?

Thinking and talking

- what is the significance of the marriage feast in Matthew's mind?
- how do you read the idea that they 'made light' of the invitation?
- what has Matthew in mind when he writes that they killed those who brought the invitation?
- how do you read the idea that the King's slaves invited 'both good and bad' to the feast?
- what can we make of this teaching for today?

Using your Bible

Recall how Matthew has just used the parable of the vineyard taken from Mark.

- Matthew 21: 33-41

Matthew now shapes a second parable with the same structure. This time Matthew shares material with Luke but shapes it differently.

- Luke 14: 16-24

Explore passages in the Old Testament about the wedding feasts.

- Isaiah 25: 6-9

Exploring online

- explore the Wedding Feast in the Bible
- explore images and classic art of the Wedding Feast
- explore contemporary wedding invitations

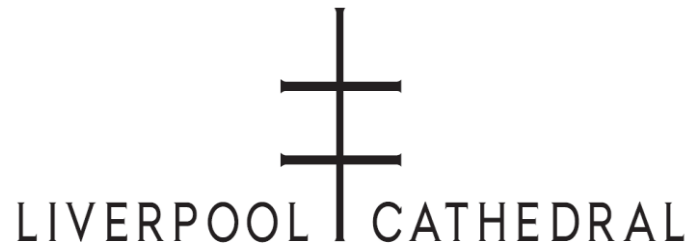
Drawing on experience

- reflect on your experiences of not wanting to accept invitations
- reflect on your experiences of having your invitations rejected
- reflect on your rejections of God's invitations to you

PROPER 23 (YEAR A) SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2020

Creating and making

- create invitations inviting others to share in the feast
- create a collage of the wedding feast and the eucharistic feast: 'Everyone was invited'
- create a poster listing reasons not to accept the invitation
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer on Matthew's parable of the invitation to the wedding



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Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel. We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

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