

OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA, WEYMOUTH
HOMILY FOR 28th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)
15th OCTOBER 2017

“And the wedding hall was *filled* with *people!*”

Today’s Gospel is another of Jesus’ parables (teaching stories) as told by Saint Matthew.

Parables tell us something about God and ourselves; about our relationship.

Our RCIA group was thinking about the meaning of faith this week and found that faith can be understood as our relationship with God.

For many centuries the Church thought of faith only as an acceptance of facts about God, doctrines to which our conscience is bound and morality to which our wills must be obedient,

Pope Saint John XXIII whose feast we celebrated on Thursday started a recovery of faith as something that moves hearts as well as heads.

Our Catholic faith is founded on the person of Jesus Christ; the doctrine and the moral life come from him; without him they are lack life.

A relationship needs an “I” and a “You”.

In faith the “I” of us meets the “You” of God, but God is unseen, unheard, untouched and relationships depend on both the “I” and the “You” knowing each other, finding points of similarity and agreement, points which cause love to develop.

We need to know something about God if our relationship is to grow.

In Jesus the nature of God is revealed,

In this parable Jesus compares God to a king, a figure of absolute power, who prepares a wedding feast for his son.

This parable was originally aimed at the Pharisees, the leaders of God’s Chosen People. They are the guests who refused the invitation because they rejected Jesus, the Son of God.

Jesus is trying to make them realise what they are missing, but what happens at the end of the parable is most revealing about God’s relationship with us.

“The wedding hall was *filled* with *people!*”

Every seat was occupied; the hall was full!

God wants to be surrounded by people, anyone who is willing to accept his invitation.

This is faith – to say “yes” to God. “Yes, I do want to be with you at your wedding feast, I do want to be your guest.”

God invites everyone regardless of their past life or present status.

The only condition is that they come properly dressed – that they prepare for the feast by living lives as God-like as possible, so that they will be like God when they arrive.

A relationship is perfect when the “I” and the “You” are in perfect harmony.

Arrive where?

Isaiah in the first reading sees the feast as heaven, reached after we die, so in this life we hear the invitation, accept it and prepare for the feast. This is faith.

“The wedding hall was *filled with people!*”

God wants to be surrounded by all his people; wants everyone to be with him; wants heaven to be full; no empty places.

God wants *people* to be with him, not just angels, but people like us.

Isaiah sees the heavenly banquet as perfect.

St. Paul says: “God will fulfil your needs as lavishly as only God can.”

God wants the very best for us – not just the best food and finest wine, but no sorrow, no tears; so that we will all say: “He is our God! We have put our *trust* in him.” This is faith.

Have you ever looked into the sky and wondered, “Is there any goodness out there?” Our readings encourage us to see a merciful providence filling our world; the God who wants heaven to be filled with people like us.

Rev Geoffrey Carey