

## Homily 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year A 2020

In both Old and New Testaments, the Kingdom of God is compared to a banquet of rich food and fine wines – the best of celebrations. God is bountiful. God offers us the very best of everything. Having just finished the First Communion celebrations, it is appropriate to reflect on the eucharist. The eucharist is a rich banquet in which the meal consists of bread and wine that becomes the body and blood of Christ, the total gift of God to us. The eucharist, however, is a rich paradox. Ronald Rolheiser writes: *bread is both a symbol of joy, togetherness, health, and achievement even as it is made up of broken kernels of wheat which had to be crushed in their individuality and baked in fire to become that bread. Wine is both a festive drink, the drink of celebration, of wedding, even as it is crushed grapes and represents the blood of Jesus and the blood and suffering of all that is crushed in our world and in our lives.*” The eucharist embraces all the joys, successes, everything that is good about life along with the suffering, pain, tragedy and evils of life, turning them into a life beyond imagining that reflects the true glory and love of God that conquers all. It is both intimately and uniquely personal but urges us, even requires us, to share it with others - the more the merrier. Jesus’ story today makes it clear that we can reject his invitation. It is also clear that everyone without exception is welcome to the banquet, to the eucharist. There will always be enough, however many. It shows us how intimately present God is to us in Jesus Christ, those here present and those present with us in spirit. It helps us recognise God’s presence outside the eucharist, in our everyday lives, in our daily encounters. Social distancing has caused much suffering. Embracing, holding, hugging, have been put on hold. But we are learning to show greater respect towards others and encouraged to focus on the honour, dignity and reverence we should show to those we encounter. **Pope Francis:**

*“The Eucharist brings us the Father’s faithful love. It gives us Jesus’ love, which transformed a tomb from an end into a beginning and can transform our lives. It fills our hearts with the consoling love of the Holy Spirit, who never leaves us and always heals our wounds. Every time we receive him, he reminds us that we are precious, that we are guests he has invited to his banquet, friends with whom he wants to dine. Not only because he is generous, but because he is truly in love with us. He sees and loves the beauty and goodness that we are. The Eucharist is not simply an act of remembrance, it is the Lord’s Passover made present for us. The Eucharist raises us from our comfortable lifestyle and reminds us that we are not only mouths to be fed, but also his hands, to be used to help feed others.*

*Why do fish live in saltwater?*

*Because pepper makes them sneeze.*

*What do you call a rabbit with fleas?*

*Bugs Bunny.*

*Did you hear about the hyena that swallowed an Oxo cube?*

*He made a laughing stock of himself.*