

Homily 28th Sunday Year A – 2023

For those who are upset that the person at the wedding feast without a garment is treated so harshly, know that a King would have a room full of suitable clothing for all those unable to afford them. Not wearing the right garment when all the other people from the highways and byways were suitably attired would be seen as a public snub to the host.

The two stories however show how important to us is the Eucharistic banquet to which we are invited by our King, Jesus Christ. First of all, it is an honour to be invited and even greater honour to attend. Jesus himself provides us with the clothes we need to attend. He freed us from sin and its evil by dying on the cross for us and rising from the dead. Unlike the parable we are not the riffraff but invited guests who are loved and cherished. We come to the Eucharist, not just to be fed with the graces and sustenance we need to live the gospel in our daily lives but out of love and thanksgiving and the desire to praise our God who loves us so dearly. As we clearly state at every celebration, we are not worthy to receive Christ but Christ earnestly desires to become fully part of our lives, such is his love for us.

Archbishop Charles Thompson, Indianapolis, reflects on the link between synodality and the Eucharist: These two themes are not mutually exclusive of one another. There is an inbuilt focus linking these two in what it means to be Catholic and provide us with a tremendous opportunity of grace.

“Lumen Gentium” of Vatican II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church reaffirms the Eucharist as the “source and summit of the Christian life.” All ministries and services in the Church are bound up and oriented towards it. [#1324]. Our communion, participation and mission are rooted in our Eucharistic identity.

Properly engaging in a synodal process involves a willingness to remain open to accompaniment, dialogue and encounter. Such commitment will be grounded in the word of God, the grace of sacraments and the outreach of service. Prayer, both individual and communal, plus Catholic teaching are essential to this commitment.

Accompaniment involves meeting people where they are, healing wounds and warming hearts; not merely leaving them where they are found. The word implies a desire to bring others along in the journey of faith, striving for healing, growth, reconciliation and conversion.

Authentic dialogue involves a willingness to listen, trust, respect and respond rather than react to one another.

Encountering others means that we look at one another with a sense of awe and wonder for the presence of God within them. It also means that we are open to a spirit of integrity, compassion, courage and an understanding of truth.

Eucharist is “an action of thanksgiving to God.” Grateful people are often the happiest among us. Focusing on the positive rather than what divides. Let us be grateful to God for the gifts and blessings bestowed upon us. God unites while Satan divides.

Centring our lives and relationships on the Eucharist, we must strive with grateful hearts and minds to embrace unity within diversity rather than allow the evil one to drive us apart. In fidelity to our Eucharistic identity and mission, we will seek the path of synodality by means of accompaniment, dialogue and encounter.

Keep in mind that Jesus ate and drank with sinners, meeting them as they were but not leaving them as he found them. Our fruitful engagement in the synodal process of listening and discerning, especially as a community of believers, necessarily demands that we be Christ-centred in our encounters with one another in a spirit of openness, courage, humility and generosity. Catholic presence, identity and mission are rooted in the belief and lived experience of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.