Suggested Opening Song: We Come to Your Feast, #168

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells a parable of a king who invites anyone and everyone to a huge feast he is giving for the wedding of his son. Similarly, every Sunday we all are invited to a wonderful feast: the eucharistic feast, the wedding feast of the Lamb. We accept the Lord's invitation to partake in his sacrificial meal, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet we hope to attend one day. Let us give thanks and praise to our God, who welcomes us to the feast.

As we gather let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

Profession of Faith p. 142
I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (*bow as we say*) ***and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*** **For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Introductory Rite:
Greeting:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.
Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

Penitential Rite: p. 10
Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred celebration.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen**

Opening Prayer:
May your grace, O Lord, we pray, at all times go before us and follow after and make us always determined to carry out good works.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 104
A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah Isaiah *25:6-10*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines. On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever. The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from every face; the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the LORD has spoken. On that day it will be said: "Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the LORD for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!" For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Responsorial Psalm *Psalm 23 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6*

R/. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.
R/. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul. **R/**

He guides me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil;
for you are at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage. **R/**

You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. **R/**

Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come. **R/**

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians *Philippians 4: 12-14, 19-20*

Brothers and sisters: I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance. In every circumstance and in all things I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me. Still, it was kind of you to share in my distress. My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father, glory forever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel *Matthew 22:1-14*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew **Glory to you, Lord**

Jesus again in reply spoke to the chief priests and elders of the people in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come. A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: "Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast."' Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.' The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests, he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. The king said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind

his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' Many are invited, but few are chosen."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Reflection on the Word:

- The king in Jesus' parable is quite persistent. He sends his servants out to invite the same guests a second time to his son's wedding feast. In fact, it is possible that some of those who declined his invitation twice were invited a third time when the servants simply invited everyone they found in the streets. Indeed, they may have invited those who had earlier mistreated the servants, as "bad and good alike" were welcomed as guests (Matthew 22:10). God continues to invite to the Son's feast those who initially or repeatedly refuse, even those who respond inappropriately. We ourselves may have needed multiple invitations. We still may.

- However, after the king throws out a guest who is not wearing a wedding garment, Jesus points out that "Many are invited, but few are chosen" (22:14). The wedding garment may be seen as the act of repentance, which enables the guest's heart to be ready and worthy of both the eucharistic feast and the kingdom of heaven, which is what Jesus says the parable is all about. This wedding garment may be challenging to don, but it is available to anyone and everyone. With our repentance and God's forgiveness, we can be welcomed to the heavenly banquet.

- In the second reading, Paul tells the Philippians that God will supply anything they need. We may come to the feast unprepared and lacking a "wedding garment," but that does not mean that we are doomed to be thrown out into the darkness. No, God, "to whom we looked to save us" (Isaiah 25:9), will supply the wedding garment that will save us: mercy, forgiveness, redemption. Clothed in God's love, we will be properly prepared to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Question of the Week
What will I do this week to weave a wedding garment of repentance, mercy, and love for the Lord's feast? What do I need to repent of? Who needs my mercy? How can I show love?

Prayer of the Faithful:
Saint Paul attests that God will fully supply what we need, so we give voice to our needs, that they may be lifted to God in heaven.

- For the Church, that we may be always eager to invite those with sincere hearts to join us at the banquet Jesus left us, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- That world leaders may work together to end hunger and poverty, especially for those who were born into those circumstances and have never had the experience of a feast of plenty, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For Native Americans, that they may continually receive the resources they need, and that this nation of plenty may atone for generations of mistreatment and neglect, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For the recently married as they embark on their new life together, that their love may be a sign of Christ's love for his people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For those who bring the Eucharist to people who are home-bound, in hospitals, and in long-term care facilities, that they may find reward in their essential ministry, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For what else should we pray? Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Generous God, you invite us all to your feast: bad and good alike, rich and poor, native and newcomer, worthy and unworthy. Grant us the grace to do the same, as you hear the prayers we make to you today, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer: p. 176
Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Rite of Peace:
The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Communion:
Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:
We entreat your majesty most humbly, O Lord, that, as you feed us with the nourishment which comes from the most holy Body and Blood of your Son, so you may make us sharers of his divine nature.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Concluding Rite:
Final Blessing:
May the Lord bless us, ✠ protect us from all evil and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen**

Go in peace! **Thanks be to God.**

Suggested Closing Song: Holy God, We Praise Thy Name, #194