**28th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Cycle A**

October 14/15, 2017

Isaiah 25: 6-10a; Philippian 4: 12-14; Matthew 22: 1-14

“Many are invited; few are chosen.” (Mt 22: 14)

It is tempting to say “Yes” to an invitation to a party, or a gala, or a banquet, when someone says, “Come on it! You will have a great time! It’ll cost you nothing. It is on me.”

God invites us to the heavenly banquet and it is easy to respond, “Yes, God. I will go. I will sing your praises and bask in your love for all eternity” but it is more difficult to live a life that gets us ready. Jesus asks us today if we are willing to prepare ourselves for heaven, whether or not we are willing to prepare ourselves, or do we just want to show up and expect t to be admitted? Are we ***humble*** enough to acknowledge our need to prepare ourselves for t he rewards of heaven, or are we content to remain in our ***pride*** living lives for ourselves and not for others.

**Pride** or **humility**? Which will we choose to wear? Which garment will you put on?

The garment that will get us into heaven is the garment of humility. Those who have taken off the garment of pride, arrogance, anger, and violence and put on the garment of humility and peace are fit for heaven.

Two weeks ago, our country witnessed again the results of pride, arrogance, and anger. I am referring to the shootings in Las Vegas. Killing, violence, terrorism, disrespect for human life – they all are the result of pride and arrogance. “How can you say that?” you may ask me. “Isn’t it the work of Satan, the effects of evil?” Yes, it is, but Satan’s methods are pride and arrogance and anger. Pride is at the root of every sin; anger at the root of every act of violence and killing.

*When will it stop? When will WE stop this madness? It must end!*

How can we end this disrespect for human life in our country? By creating new laws? Maybe, but Satan respects no law. We must end this disrespect for human life in our country if we expect to be admitted to the heaven banquet. We must put on the garment of humility, and come to understand that ***God’s love has been poured into all human life.*** We must come to understand that we are but the servants of this love, servants of God, and servants of each other. **We are not the Masters of Death; we are Servants of Life!** We must acknowledge that God loves life, and so must we.

If we are to be on e of the chosen, we must put an end to killing, and to the anger and violence that reside in our hearts, and end to the madness that is a result of pride and arrogance.

We must rise in this country and demand an end to the killing around us and to the pride and arrogance within us. With God’s help, we can do it. Satan uses us when we are proud. Do we want to be used by him? I hope not. Jesus once said, “Get behind me Satan!” and so must we.

We must do what we must do first of all in our own lives to place ourselves at the service of life, not bring about death. We must not directly take innocent human life. We cannot kill bystanders in acts of terrorism. We must not kill the unborn. We must not end the lives of the sick and the aged. We must not be complicit in killing of others by remaining silent. We must end war.

The madness of Las Vegas is Satan’s work; the result of his ability to delude us into thinking that some of us are more valuable than others, that human life is cheap and can be destroyed. Satan wants us to think that we are equal to God. What happened in Las Vegas was evil, the work of pride and arrogance.

How dare we allow the lives of others, lives God created, lives which God has invited to the heavenly banquet, to be destroyed?

God love the person we dispose of. God cares about the person we condemn to death. God wants fullness of life for every unborn child. Will we put on the garment of humility, and think like God thinks or will we remain in our pride and be used? These are basic questions our nation needs to answer.

We must say, “Enough!” to the violence in our country and in our hearts. We must embrace life, not death; peace, not violence. We must end this madness, this disrespect for human life. We must reject Satan’s temptation to think of others as less important than us; as burdens rather than as gifts; as disposable rather than of infinite value.

We must end this madness, the madness we saw in Las Vegas. It begins with each of us looking at ourselves and asking, “Am I willing to confess the pride that is in my heart, the arrogance that exists there, and am I willing to do whatever is needed to root it out?”

Put on the garment that will get you into heaven, the garment of humility, the garment of respect for others, the garment of peace.

Stop the killing and respect life!