

Father O'Connor's Homily for 11 October 2026
Twenty-Eighth Ordinary Sunday-A

Isaiah 25: 6-10a
Philippians 4: 12-14, 19-20
Matthew 22: 1-14

Harry was a suit-and-tie kind of guy who was just getting into the world of “business casual Fridays.” So he asked his wife to purchase some clothes for him that she thought would be appropriate.

On Friday morning he went to the closet, saw some new clothes hanging there and he selected a sweater.

Arriving home after work, he announced to his wife that his presentation had been a major success. She turned around to look at him and said with surprise, “You wore that sweater to work today?”

“Oh, yes, Honey,” he replied. “And people couldn’t stop talking about it.”

“Harry,” she said, “that’s a new sweater that I bought for myself to wear!”

Jesus tells a parable in today’s Gospel. And it has something to do with clothing. It is about a wedding banquet that a king was giving for his son. And all those who had been invited refused to come. So the king extends his invitation to everyone in the streets to come to the feast.

One guest came who was not wearing an appropriate wedding garment, so the king had him thrown out into the darkness “where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.”

Why was the king so harsh with this guest?

One explanation is that when commoners were invited to the royal palace for an event, they first visited “the robing room” where they could select something appropriate to wear, free-of-charge.

But this guest preferred to wear the “dress-down-duds” that he had arrived in, rather than the “tux-and-tails” that the king provided for free.

I remember being invited to a Christmas party that I thought was a casual event. So I arrived in a pullover sweater and khaki slacks. When the hostess opened the door of her home, I saw that she was dressed in a full-length evening gown and that all the other guests were in dressy attire. I was so embarrassed!

I wanted to go home and change, but she wouldn't hear of it. Even though all the other guests treated me kindly, I spent the entire evening so self-conscious of how under-dressed and out-of-place I was. And I couldn't wait to get home!

What does this parable mean for us?

We have been invited here today to this Eucharistic Banquet, the Wedding Feast, the Supper of the Lamb. And we are expected to come "clothed in Christ."

We first became "clothed in Christ" with the life of grace at our Baptism when each of us became "an adopted child of God." We were washed clean from all sin with the waters of Baptism in the name of the Trinity. And then we were clothed with a white garment to symbolize our new spotlessness before Him.

This is what the priest or deacon said to you on the day you were baptized, when you were clothed with a white baptismal garment:

"Child of God, you have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. May this white garment be a sign to you of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into eternal life. Amen."

The Sacrament of Penance – or Reconciliation or Confession – was called "Second Baptism" by an early writer in the Church. This sacrament gives us sinners the graced opportunity to have our baptismal innocence restored and renewed.

And these are the words we hear the priest say right before we receive Jesus in Holy 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."

Everyone was invited to the wedding banquet, but the king had words of judgment for the man who was offered a free wedding garment, but who did not bother to put it on. He could have, he should have, but he didn't.

Grace is not only a gift. It is also a great responsibility. We cannot go on living the life we lived before we met Jesus. The door is open, but not for the sinner to come in and remain a sinner, but for the sinner to come in and become a saint.

We have been invited to this Eucharistic Banquet, the Wedding Feast, the Supper of the Lamb. And we are expected and enabled by God to arrive

“clothed in Christ” with the life of grace as God’s beloved sons and daughters.

A priest-friend of mine in the Bahamas, Monsignor Preston Moss, shared a story about himself that reminds me of this Gospel. He told me that, when he was a little boy, growing up in Nassau, this is what his mother did each year on his birthday.

He said, “Mama would come into my bedroom early in the morning on my birthday, and she would wake me up with a kiss on my forehead. And then Mama would say to me, ‘Child, I am so glad that you were born!’”

Take that illustration with you today, and think of God our Father choosing you, being pleased with you, loving you so much. Think of God our Father waking you up with a kiss each morning and saying to you, no matter what your age, “Child, I am so glad that you were born!”

By God’s grace and favor, we have been called, we have been chosen, to be God’s own beloved children.

And we are invited to this Eucharistic Banquet, the Wedding Feast, the Supper of the Lamb.

Hear God say to you with tenderness today, “Child, I am so glad that you were born!”