

The Third Sunday after Trinity - June 20,2021

“And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost Amen!

Last week, we thought together about the Great Banquet of the Kingdom of God-the Supper of the Lamb of God that has been prepared for all who will come to it in gratitude and thanksgiving! We learned with sadness about those valued guests who were so preoccupied with their own self interest that they turned their backs on the generosity of their host, and instead chose to refuse this invitation to the life of joy and fullness that is to be found at the table of God!

But all was not lost-the host, wishing that all might taste of his supper, had his servants go out and seek those who would come with gladness of heart and humble thanksgiving to the great meal! How great it is to consider that the Eternal Table of God is open to all-that He is waiting for us with anticipation and love to be seated beside Him at His Heavenly Feast.

Today we are called to think deeply upon the generous love and charity that our Blessed Lord Jesus has for us-for all of us-no matter who we are, or where we come from, or what our story might be! It is an account of the burning desire of the heart of God to gather His dear children close to Him, in the safety and blessedness of Heaven! It reassures each of us that our Lord is the one who comes to us in our great need and searches for us, so that we might find refreshment and life in His Kingdom of Grace!

Our Blessed Lord finds Himself viewed with suspicion and contempt by the religious elite of His day! The Pharisees and Scribes react with disbelief to the generosity of the Divine Love! How is it possible that the one who proclaims Himself the Promised One of Israel, should waste His time with those who stand so far from the Kingdom of God by their sins! How can the Christ stand to be in the company of those who seem to have so little regard for the ways of the Law of God? But dear friends, the wonderful and transforming truth of the matter is that He does care! He does not stand at a distance from us, but rather seeks out the lost ones, the helpless ones, the poor sheep that are so desperately in need of rescue and healing!

In other words, He goes in search of people just like you and I! What a reason for us to rejoice-to think that the One who created Heaven and Earth is seeking for the helpless and despairing! When we understand this, then suddenly confidence replaces despair, and we can feel that all is not lost-that there is one who can and will come to bind up our wounds, put us on His shoulder, and restore us to life-true life in the Kingdom of God.

Isn't this what the world needs-to hear that the Holy Lamb of God is that loving and faithful shepherd that will go in search of His dear lost ones. Isn't this what each of us need to hear and

take deeply to heart- that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners!” Here in today’s Gospel we have a remedy for the sicknesses of our hearts-for the chaos and confusion of our lives! This remedy, that is not found in our own abilities, but that is found in the Precious and Life Giving Blood of Christ, brings new life and healing to all who will go to the source of all that is good and true and holy-to the waiting embrace of the Lord Jesus, who so patiently and lovingly seeks for us, and who promises the riches of eternity to His people-who are the sheep of His Hand!

The Lord Jesus speaks to us in today’s Gospel of the great rejoicing in Heaven over the rescue of the lost. None of us can ever fully imagine the immense joy that fills the Heavenly worlds when one who is so dearly loved, is rescued from the way of death and hopelessness. But we can I think understand in some degree the joy that must fill the Sacred Heart of our Lord, to know that one of His little ones has been found, and is returning home to the green pastures of mercy and forgiveness. We must also be aware of the terrible sorrow that must fill His Heart for those who will turn their backs on His offer of life, and walk deliberately on the way that leads to darkness and destruction. So let each one of us here resolve to trust this dear shepherd of souls, that is seeking us so diligently-let us place ourselves with confidence under the loving care of the one who is so very, very kind and gentle with us even in the times when we have wandered so far from His embrace. May we remember that He hears our call for His grace and help. He will come to us in our need, when we find ourselves lost and despairing. He really does stand ready to restore us to life and hope if we will bow to Him as the One who is the very Lord of Life.

St. Peter tells us what a once lost and now rescued sheep must look like! He tells us in our Epistle reading that true humility of heart should be the spiritual hallmark of the one who has been brought back to the living flock of Christ. For each and every one of us who have experienced the joy of being restored to life by the Lover of Souls, we must give ourselves anew to Him with a sure confidence that He will care for us in body and soul, and that He can be trusted to bring us safely to Himself in Paradise in His good time.

But there is also the need for us to be sober and watchful over our hearts. It is so very easy for us to be led away from this blessed relationship with our Lord isn’t it. We find within our hearts so many barriers to His love, so many things deep within us that cloud our spiritual vision, and that keep us from being centred upon the things of God. We need to set a spiritual guard over our minds, our wills, and our loves, to shield us from the attacks of the destroyer of souls. We need to be nourishing and nurturing our souls in love and faith so that we will not be led away by the allurements of the world and its false claims.

On this Third Sunday after Trinity, we can approach the Altar to seek at His hand the spiritual medicine that will both cure the diseases of our hearts, and keep us faithful to Him as our soul’s true wealth. Here, in His Holy Church, is where we are equipped with those spiritual graces that will strengthen each of us as we seek to be faithful to the one who has been so faithful and loving to us!

The Pharisees and Scribes murmured at the readiness of our Blessed Lord Jesus to associate with sinners- to go in search of the lost and the hopeless. We need each one of us, to see ourselves as a part of that blessed company of those who have been called to Eternal Life in and through our Saviour Christ! May we be truly grateful for all that He has done, and for all the graces and mercies that He has promised us as we are humble, faithful, and watchful!

Glory Be To God For All Things! AMEN