

## The Twenty Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 14:16-24

Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. (KJV)

The Lord God offers a great supper for believers throughout the course of life. The great supper includes the offering of the Lord Jesus Christ's Precious Body and Blood.

The Lord's invitation to partake in the great supper is indeed very special for believers and is to be taken most seriously. The world puts forth temptations and diversions to deter participation in the Lord's great supper.

Hunger in the soul is satisfied through participation in the Lord's great supper. Unity with the Lord Jesus Christ occurs when partaking of the Precious Body and Blood.

Eternal life comes closer with each participation in the Lord's great supper. The decision to participate in the Lord's supper is best accompanied by the firm rejection of sin in life.

Participating in the Lord's great supper is a way of firmly and unequivocally expressing love for the Lord. Joy arises in the heart, mind and soul when partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ.

All of life is an opportunity to prepare for the Lord's great supper. Rejecting sin, repenting, fasting and preparing keep the believer ready to say "yes" to the Lord at each offering to partake.

The Lord knows each person's sinfulness. The Lord knows each person's readiness to come to the banquet. Gratitude is due the Lord at all times for each invitation to partake.

Daily life has challenges, demands and temptations. The resolute believer will keep life and the Lord in the proper perspective. The Lord's invitation is welcomed among serious believers.

The Nativity Fast is a time to assess life's priorities and the degree of commitment to the Lord God. Family, work, education and community life each have their place in life.

When the Lord God is the first priority in life, all else in life takes the proper place. Honest self-evaluation is necessary throughout life to make necessary adjustments in life.

Too often sin creeps into life either intentionally or unintentionally. Rejection of sin and repentance have a place throughout life. Being united with the Lord through partaking of Communion restores health to life.

The Church structures the year for believers to remain united with Christ and to grow in Christ. Adherence to the fasts and participation in the feasts of the Church fosters growth.

The Divine services, particularly the Divine Liturgy, strengthens and educates believers. The earnest believer will heed the Gospel lesson in each Divine Liturgy and seek to make the lesson a part of daily life.

The Feast of the Nativity is drawing near. Anticipation is increasing among believers preparing for the feast. Welcoming the opportunity to celebrate with the Lord at the great supper certainly has a primary place in the Christian life.

Take time during the remaining days of the Nativity Fast to evaluate the personal commitment to the Lord God. Assess what can be repelled from life that is not of Jesus Christ.

With each Divine Liturgy be ready to partake of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. Welcome the opportunities for Confession to repent and begin anew in Christ.

The Lord God does not want believers to perish in sin. The Lord God does not want hearts to harden and believers to fall away from the Church. The Lord keeps offering the invitation to draw near in faith and in love.

God's goodness, mercy and love are beyond measure. The current Gospel about the great supper is an indication of the breadth and depth of the Lord's love. This Gospel is proclaimed each year as the Feast of the Nativity draws near.

Now is the time to expand our personal view of the Lord's love for each of us. Now is the time to rid ourselves of all that stands in the way in our lives impeding unity with Christ.

Thank God for His endless love, mercy and goodness. Thank God for the opportunities to begin anew in Christ. May our hearts, minds and souls say a resounding "yes" at each invitation from the Lord God.

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The Twenty Seventh Sunday after Pentecost. H.Mart. Eustratius; H.Hmrt Gabriel and Nicodemus of Serbia. Serbian Mother's Day. December 13/26, 2021. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic