



*Light and  
Love in the  
darkness*

## CELEBRATING AT HOME 28<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Invitations refused and accepted*  
(Mt 22:1-14)

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when we cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.

# CELEBRATING AT HOME

## 28<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church  
in this moment of prayer.**

### Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God  
to be the Church,  
**the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God  
in this world.**

Eternal God,  
your love for us  
surpasses all our hopes and desires.  
**May our love for you express itself  
in our eagerness to do good for others.**

### Scripture Reading (Matthew 22:1-14)

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come.

Next he sent some more servants. "Tell those who have been invited" he said, "that I have my banquet all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the wedding." But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them.

The king was furious. He dispatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find to the wedding." So

these servants went out to the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, "How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?" And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." For many are called but few are chosen.'

### Reflection - *Invitations refused and accepted*

The third of the parables addressed to the chief priests and the elders is our Gospel today. Told in the context of a wedding feast given by a great King it's a parable in three parts.

The first part is about God's gracious invitation and its indifferent and sometimes violent refusal by those invited first (the religious and lay leaders).

Second part: God's invitation having been rejected by the first to whom it was offered, is now offered to others - good and bad alike (the sinners).

Third part: the story of the guest without a wedding garment (one who accepts the invitation but does not change - a little like the son in the first parable who said, "Yes", but didn't go to the vineyard).

The wedding garment is a symbol of a converted life full of good deeds.

The sense of the last line of the Gospel: "Many are called but few are chosen", is that all are called to salvation, but it is only had by those who accept the invitation and who change and yield good deeds. There is no room for complacency.

All three Gospel parables of the last three Sundays are about conversion. Conversion is not just turning away from sin but a radical reorienting of

one's life (turning) towards God. Repentance is not so much being sorry for past sins as a total change of direction. Conversion is impossible for the self-righteous because they don't believe they need it. Hardness of heart and the refusal to listen are two great biblical sins.

In the three parables, St Matthew is urging his community to seek after true righteousness which comes from conversion and repentance, which flows from allowing the vision of God to fill their eyes and hearts. The kingdom has been entrusted to them, they are to produce its fruit of good deeds through a life of continual turning towards God.

Hard hearts, blocked ears, blind eyes, refusing to change are the path to death.

We are those who choose Life.

### Prayers of Intercession

Jesus, you are our companion and helper on the way.

**Help us know your presence in our most hidden suffering.**

May you continue to work in our hearts,  
**filling us with fresh vision and completing the work of conversion in us.**

Spirit of God,  
enlighten our minds and renew our hearts.

**May we be healing and compassion for all your people.**

### Lord's Prayer

Following the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**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.**

### Closing Prayer

God of creation,  
you invite us to the feast of your love.  
You know of what we are made  
and you give us all that we need.  
Open our lives to the fullness you offer.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**