

Isa 25: 6-10
Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6
Phil 4: 12-14,19-20
Mt 22: 1-10

HOMILY IDEAS

*(Below are some ingredients for the stew of a homily which you may wish to cook up -
Dick Nahman)*

Bottom Line Message: The Primary human task is to allow ourselves to be loved by
God ...

Objective: To introduce the hearer to or to nurture the hearer's contemplative prayer
experience.

All the physical blessings imaged in the first reading are attempts to express the
hugeness of god's largesse. God wants to throw a banquet for us (Gospel). What does
God want for us: Jesus' gives us the new commandment of love "so that your joy may be
complete" (Jn 15:11)

God's ultimate desire is for us to experience the joy of the depth of personal
Divine Love.

Each parent at Mass has experienced a reflection of this Divine love as their
heart's most intense desire is to provide the best for their children.

To experience love is to be transformed.

- What happened to you when someone said "I love you"?
- When you realized that that love was reciprocal?
- When you mutually covenanted that love in matrimony?

Did not your whole world vision change ... did not you change ... all those with
whom you relate daily were affected. You were in love and "the whole world" knew it
... not so much because you told them, but because your whole being had been
transformed.

That is the bottom line message of Jesus. "You are beloved." The ultimate desire
of God is for us to allow ourselves to be loved by God, and transformed by this love. And
this transformation will proclaim the gospel message to the world from the pulpit of your
lives – and renew the face of the earth.

- Following the example of Jesus life
 - o be open to the Father's love
 - o allow this openness to be transformative
 - o allow this transformation to instill in you the same mind – the same purpose of life – as was Jesus'.
 - o Then to let our life be the proclamation of God's love.

Love is the most fulfilling of human experiences. Yet Love is first not something we do, but something we allow to be done to us. Our ability to love and be loved is rooted in the fact that we have first been loved by God ... I John 4:19.

What gives us a sense of self and self-satisfaction? Do we value ourselves by the things we have ... physical attributes, talents, material possessions? St. Paul (2nd Reading) challenges his readers to realize that our value is in none of these, but in who we are as beloved by God who fully supplies whatever we need.

We are invited to the banquet of God's abundant love ...

- What is it in our lives that prompts us to choose to go hungry?
- Why do we so often not only reject the invitation but bear resentment to those who bear it?

What may help us to realize more deeply that we are beloved?

Human experiences may serve as a model ...

What does one do when they wish to experience the feeling of being loved?

- A child will crawl into a parent's lap, cuddle closely. "Unless you become as little children."
- Lovers hold each other quietly and tenderly. And lovers discover, sometimes the hard way, that moments of quiet, tender, attentive, personal awareness are essential if the fires of love are to remain aflame.

What behavior in our lives with God images the wisdom of the child or lovers?

Our Catholic Christian tradition offers us many helps ...

The behavior of an adult "cuddling" with God, quietly and tenderly, is often called "contemplation."

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- --- Here I suggest the preacher then introduce their hearers to some method of contemplative prayer **WHATEVER NOURISHES YOU IN THIS ENTERPRISE OF DEEPER PRAYER.**
 - o
 - o the Jesus Prayer
 - o Centering Prayer
 - o The Rosary (properly prayed)
 - o Lexio Divina
 - o Classic meditation

A (cleaned up) line from the play Auntie Mame: "Life is a Banquet, and so many people are starving to death."

Christian life is a banquet. Meditative/contemplative prayer is the wedding garment.

A story:

Back in the early 1900s a family prepared to emigrate from Italy. The village got together and had a party for the family. They supplied them with baskets of bread, cheese for the long sea voyage. Not having any money the family had the poorest accommodations. After a week or so the children became restless and complaining about a diet of only bread and cheese. The parents gave them a coin and told them that perhaps they might find a piece of fruit. The children were gone for quite a while and when they returned their arms were illed with fruit, meats, pastry etc. The parents were horrified. "What have you done? How can we afford to pay for all this?" they exclaimed. "But mamma, poppa, you don't understand ... all this food came with the price of the ticket."

The banquet of our tradition of prayer comes with the price of our Catholic ticket. Yet we often fail to tell people, and they wind up daily nourishing themselves on bread and cheese.