

28th Sunday 2011
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Enough! That's the word for today. One word. But is the one word "enough", "Enough: to say all that needs to be said? What about my Tone of voice? Enough (I've had it) Enough (do you want more?)

Our scriptures today are all about "enough". In the beautiful image of God's holy mountain, there is more than enough for all. This rich feast of juicy foods and fine wines that the Lord provides is enough for all peoples. No one is excluded. God brings to the banquet table all those who are hungry. There is more than enough for all. And then there is the image of the God who hears the cry of the broken hearted who suffer pain and loss and cry "enough". God promises healing for those who have had enough of suffering and death. God's will is wiping away every tear, destroying the veil of death. Beautiful imagery! God's promise. You really can't get enough of that!

But sadly, in the here and now, that is not the reality that so many people who are hungry experience. The victims of famine, war, poverty cry "enough". Even though we are told that there is "enough" food to feed the world, our human race has not yet figured out how not to waste when there are so many who want. But it is not only the hungry who never have enough to satiate their hunger who yearn for God's reign where all will be fed. The cries of "enough" come as well from the unemployed, the uninsured, those who resent the fact that we live in the world where there is disproportionate wealth in the hands of a few, where those whose incomes are over one million balk at paying even a little more. The cries of "enough" echo in the voices of all those who are suffering injustice, exclusion, whose human dignity is compromised by "want" for the essentials of life and human dignity.

In the Gospel, however, it seems as if it is God who has had "enough". Here God's tone of voice is quite harsh, filled with frustration. "I've had enough", you can almost hear God saying through the voice of the king in the parable, "I've had enough!" I invite them to the banquet in honor of my son and they refused to come!" Even though the context of the Gospel is Matthew's explanation to his Jewish-Christian community why the outcasts, tax collectors and sinners, even Gentiles are now welcome to the banquet and his criticism of the religious leaders who rejected Jesus, there must be some meaning in this parable for us.

Where do we find ourselves in this particular parable of the kingdom? Do we accept the invitation that God offers to share his life at this banquet table? Do we accept the invitation that God offers to share ourselves with our brothers and sisters who are in most need, whether those needs be material or spiritual? Do we believe that we have received more than enough from the abundance that God shares with us that we will look for ways in which the hungry can be fed and the broken-hearted made whole as we hear from the prophet Isaiah?

We live our lives often times between “enough!” and “enough”. I wonder if the words of the Apostle Paul cannot help us bridge the gap between the two. Paul tells us from his prison cell that he has more than enough of what he needs. In Christ Jesus, he has received everything. This experience of having more than enough of God’s love, healing, forgiveness, the riches of Christ in his life gives Paul the freedom to accept all things as gift. He does not measure by what he has or doesn’t have. In Christ he has “all”. Paul from his prison cell has come to see that God’s gifts are “enough”. St Ignatius echoes Paul when he says
Give me only your love and your grace, that’s enough for me.
That’s enough for me.