

Here's a text if you've only a minute - - -

The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek.

[Isaiah 25—1st Reading]

See, this is our God in whom we hoped for salvation; the Lord is the one in whom we hoped.

[Isaiah 25—1st Reading]

There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength. [Philippians—2nd Reading]

Nothing shall be lacking to those who fear the Lord.

[Communion Antiphon]

Go before us in our pilgrimage of life.

[Opening prayer]

Looking towards next week

What does next week hold for me, and how do I feel God may be calling me?

And so, what do I want to ask of God for myself & others?



28th Sunday of
Ordinary Time,
Year A
9 October 2011



**If you, O Lord, laid bare our guilt, who could endure it?
But you are forgiving, God of Israel.**

[Entrance Antiphon]

Opening Prayer (second version)

Let us pray, in quiet for the grace of sincerity.

Father in heaven, the hand of your loving kindness powerfully yet gently guides all the moments of our day.

Go before us in our pilgrimage of life, anticipate our needs and prevent our falling. Send your Spirit to unite us in faith, that sharing in your service, we may rejoice in your presence.

= I begin this time of prayer by laying aside any distractions or worries I may have and slowly coming into the silence and into the awareness of God's loving presence.

= I read the prayer a few times, stopping where I feel drawn to a word or phrase, holding it and pondering it, letting it speak to my heart and draw me to prayer.

= This opening prayer uses a very human image of God walking beside us on our pilgrimage, 'powerfully yet gently' guiding us, going before us, anticipating our needs and preventing us from falling. I hold this image in my heart, recalling times in my life when I have experienced God in this way and speaking to God from my heart.

= I rest in God's loving presence and end with the 'Our Father' or other suitable prayer.

1st Reading - Isaiah 25: 6-10

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of food rich and juicy, of fine strained wines. On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations, he will destroy Death for ever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's shame every where on earth, for the Lord has said so. That day, it will be said: See, this is our God in whom we hoped for salvation; the Lord is the one in whom we hoped. We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us; for the hand of the Lord rests on this mountain.

This passage proclaims a new world order, with all nations and Israel feasting together in Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-5. The image of a feast—found also in today's gospel - describes this new order, the way God wants our world to be, God's kingdom to which all of us are invited.

= I read the passage slowly, noting the imagery of the banquet God prepares for his people. How does the reading affect me? What does it say to me about God? I talk to God, present to me now.

= At this banquet there will be neither mourning nor death, but exultation and rejoicing. Perhaps this promise seems idealistic to me? Or does it inspire hope? I share with God how I feel, asking for what I most deeply desire, perhaps a deeper faith in God's promise and God's love.

= The passage points ahead to the time of the Messiah, especially to the person of Jesus, Son of God, fulfilment of the promise, the one who 'has saved us'. Can I 'exult and rejoice' in this truth? I speak with Jesus about the blessings of salvation, thanking him and placing my hope and trust in him.

The Gospel - Matthew 22: 1- 10 (Shorter version)

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

= I take a few moments to become still in God's presence and to ask for God's guidance during this time of prayer. I slowly read the text, pausing where I feel drawn.

= Jesus presents the Kingdom of God as a marriage feast to which all are invited. I reflect on how I respond to God's invitation to sit down at his table. How open am I right now? Or am I tied up in all kinds of concerns that do not really matter? I speak to God about this, acknowledging honestly where I stand and expressing what is in my heart.

= When ready, I ask God for what I need: perhaps greater freedom to respond to God's invitation each day, perhaps the grace to 'put on' Christ, to be clothed in the 'wedding garment' of Christ-like attitudes and values.

= I end the prayer simply being in God's presence, attentive and listening, ending with the Glory be to the Father...