**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Sunday, October 11, 2020,**

**28th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*“I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life” Psalm 23:6*

**TECHNICAL CHECK-IN (Betty Thompson)**

I’m Betty Thompson and I welcome you here on behalf of Solidarity with Sisters.

* We sent the files of readings, responses, and lyrics.
* Camera, Gallery/Speaker view. Second screen? Mute/unmute, even during singing.
* **I will now mute everybody.** Unmute to speak.

Now let’s put technical things aside.

**WELCOME (Lynn Bufka)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* My dad and I had the pleasure of preparing today’s communal prayer.
* Thanks to Stu Sklamm and Reggie Ott for making us musical.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: Mary Ott, Betty Thompson, Suzie DeQuattro, Jim DeQuattro, Debbie Ballard, Linda Donaldson, George Fulk, Judy Sholes, Maryann Dolan, Jill McGowan, Anne Regan, Bill Fanelli, Ann Jelen, Bob Gallagher, Sylvia and Kevin Lynch.
* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Lynn Bufka)**

Settle into a comfortable position. Feel any tightness in your body and let your muscles loosen. Notice your thoughts and try to put aside those that distract you. Notice your breath as it goes in and out. As you exhale, let tensions leave you. As you inhale, feel God’s love flowing into you. And now let’s take 3 deep breaths. One to be here… one to be together….and one to create space for how God will lead us today.

Now Stu Sklamm will lead us into our celebration.

**OPENING –** [Table of Plenty](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_t8O_PwPlKA) by Dan Schutte  **(Stu Sklamm?)**

Refrain: Come to the feast of heaven and earth!

Come to the table of plenty!

God will provide for all that we need, here at the table of plenty.

V2: O come and eat without money; Come to drink without price.

My feast of gladness will feed your spirit with faith and fullness of life. Refrain

V3: My bread will ever sustain you through days of sorrow and woe.

My wine will flow like a sea of gladness to flood the depths of your soul. Refrain

**GREETING (Lynn Bufka)**

Beloved Community, rejoice!The Spirit of Christ is among us! Alleluia!

**All:** And all God’s people reply: Amen! Alleluia!

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Mary Ott)**

We come together today because it is with each other that we experience ourselves as the people of God and the body of Christ. We gather to celebrate the great fact that God is in love with us. We are confident that in this next hour God will act in us and through us. We believe that God will give us light for our next step. And now let us pray.

**GATHERING PRAYER (Suzie DeQuattro)**

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other’s burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts’ longings for the healing of our world.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Lynn Bufka)**

Today we hear of the abundance of life given freely by God to all. In the first reading from Isaiah, we hear the Lord provide “a feast of rich food and choice wines.” In the Gospel, the king invited all to a wedding banquet. It is up to us to accept the abundance of life every day. It can be hard to see and experience that abundance in times like now -- times of discord and loss and grief and pain. But when we do accept that abundance from God, as the Psalm says, “I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.” When we live in the house of the Lord with an attitude of abundance, the pain of discord and loss and grief is eased. We are able to reach out to others, to support each other, to share more generously and love more completely.

Now Debbie Ballard will read from the 25th chapter of the book of Isaiah. Then Jim DeQuattro will offer questions for our reflection.

**READING 1 – ISAIAH 25:6-10A** **(Debbie Ballard) (Slides: Betty Thompson)**



On this mountain the LORD of hosts will provide for all peoples

a feast of rich food and choice wines,

juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.

On this mountain he will destroy

the veil that veils all peoples,

the web that is woven over all nations;

he will destroy death forever.

The Lord GOD will wipe away

the tears from every face;

the reproach of his people he will remove

from the whole earth; for the LORD has spoken.

On that day it will be said:

"Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!

This is the LORD for whom we looked;

let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim DeQuattro) (Slides: Betty Thompson)**

Isaiah says the Lord will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, beautiful imagery of the abundance of God’s gifts.

What is it you hunger and thirst for from God right now? What will sustain you?

Imagine what it would be to have God wipe away your tears? How does that feel?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime and stop slide after 2 minutes.) (Betty and Lynn Bufka)**

**Lynn:** Now Linda Donaldson will read from the Gospel of Matthew.

**READING 2 --** **Matthew 22:1-14** **(Linda Donaldson) (Betty Thompson slides)**



Jesus again in reply spoke to the chief priests and elders of the people in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son.

He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come.

A second time he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those invited: “Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast.”’

Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business.

The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them.

The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.

Then he said to his servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.’

The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike,

and the hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests,

he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. The king said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?'

But he was reduced to silence.

Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.’ Many are invited, but few are chosen."

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim DeQuattro) (Betty Thompson slides)**

When do you not even realize you have God’s gifts right in front of you?

How does it feel to see the King fill his banquet with outcasts and then turn out a guest for being improperly dressed?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime and stop slide after 2 minutes.) (Betty Thompson and Lynn Bufka)**

Now George Fulk will read some commentaries on this Gospel from several sources, including Sr. Mary McGlone.

**READING 3: (George Fulk) (Betty Thompson slides)**



Different commentaries tell us about the ‘wedding garment.’ The custom in those days was for the one hosting the wedding feast—in this case, the king—to provide garments for the wedding guests. These wedding garments were simple, nondescript robes that all attendees wore. In this way, rank or station was covered, so everyone at the feast could mingle as equals.

So when you attended a wedding, you didn’t come showing your own social standing, wealth, or prestige, but rather you were reflecting the host.

The man who refused to wear a wedding garment was not a disdainer or rebel like the elites who refused the king's invitation.

By refusing to dress appropriately he flaunted the fact that he considered himself distinct from all the others. While the majority of the guests were far from saintly, this one person, attended the banquet but absolved himself from participating in its camaraderie.

Refusing to put on a garment of joy, the spoiler contaminated the celebration with discord and temptation, excommunicating himself even before he was evicted.

Today, we'll find spoilers among people of high rank as well as in the seemingly most ordinary individuals in church and civil society. They include authority figures who prey on others and the mean-spirited folks who delight in highlighting the flaws in every good work.

Today, as Jesus gives us a glimpse of his vision of God, he offers us a choice.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim DeQuattro) (Slide- Betty Thompson)**

It’s easy to point out others who are spoilers. How have I been a spoiler?

When do I emphasize my social standing or wealth or prestige? At whose expense?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime and stop slide after 2 minutes.) (Betty Thompson and Lynn Bufka)**

Now Judy Sholes will lead us in sharing reflections.

**SHARING TIME (Judy Sholes)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings. That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us. We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening,

As you share your feelings, please use "I” or “me". And let's leave a bit of silence between speakers. A bridge of silence allows us to take in what was just said and gives others the chance to gather their feelings to share.

So let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections. (Pause for 30 seconds.)

Now who would like to start our sharing? Remember to unmute yourself to speak and mute yourself again afterwards.

(Sharing)

Is there anyone else who would like to share? [Pause.]

Thank you.

Now Anne Regan and Bill Fanelli will lead us in prayer.

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS (Anne Regan and Bill Fanelli)**

We know God is a God of abundance, so we bring in confidence the needs in our hearts.

Our response will be: God of Abundance, hear our prayer.

As Paul said to the Philippians, “I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance.” Help us to recognize our abundance and live with gratitude no matter our circumstances. For this we pray. **God of Abundance, hear our prayer.**

Paul also said, “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.” And so we pray for strength to do what we are called to do. For this we pray. **God of Abundance, hear our prayer.**

Brother John Lewis tells us to pray with our feet. We thank you for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and its communities who are great models of praying with their feet. Let us learn to pray with our feet. For this we pray. **God of Abundance, hear our prayer.**

Sojourners tells us how to pray with our feet. Strengthen us to speak the truth in love to our church, community and political leaders. Teach us to be active bystanders and protect the most vulnerable in our community. Help us thoughtfully exercise our right to vote and help others to do so. Guide us in shopping our values and avoiding businesses that don’t reflect those values. Encourage us to share resources that promote justice, radical love, and good theology. For this we pray. **God of Abundance, hear our prayer.**

Help us accept the invitation to enter in and fully enjoy the banquet of life God spreads before us. For this we pray. **God of Abundance, hear our prayer.**

For what else shall we pray? Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute yourself afterwards.

(Shared prayers)

O you who invites us to abundance even in difficulty, we place all of our prayers, those spoken and those unspoken, into your loving care. We will do all we can to put our prayers into action – while entrusting the outcome to you. Amen.

**OFFERING/STEWARDSHIP (Maryann Dolan and Jill McGowan)**

**Maryann**

As Pope Francis said this week, prayer isn't about closing oneself in a room with God "to put makeup on your soul — that's not prayer, that's fake praying; to pray is to face God and allow yourself to be sent by him to help a brother or sister. The proving ground for prayer is concrete love for one's neighbor."

Today we ask Jill McGowan to tell us about how she is sharing God’s abundance in concrete love for our neighbors.

[**Jill** speaks.]

**Maryann**

Let us now take time to name within ourselves something we will offer to others in recognition of all that we have received from God. [Pause.]

In thanksgiving for the presence and power of Jesus Christ, and in unity with the Holy Spirit, let us pray. God of abundance, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Ann Jelen and Bob Gallagher)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in us. [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet.

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands, and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

Let us invite God into ourselves so that we become God’s living presence. [Pause.]

Holy One, you transform us as you nourish us here.

May we nourish others with your presence.

Amen.

**OUR FATHER (Sylvia and Kevin Lynch)**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

**All (muted):** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Your kingdom come. Your 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

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Lynn Bufka)**

While we keep ourselves muted, let us reach out our hands and bless each other:

**All:** May we fill our minds

with everything that is true and honorable,

just and pure, lovely and gracious.

And then may the peace of God

that surpasses all understanding

guard our hearts and minds

in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG --** [Anthem](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUdrid_jAMI) by Tom Conry **(Reggie Ott)**

Refrain: We are called, we are chosen. We are Christ for one another.

We are promised to tomorrow, while we are for him today.

We are sign, we are wonder. We are sower, we are seed.

We are harvest, we are hunger. We are question, we are creed.

V2: Then how are we to stand at all, this world of bended knee?

In nothing more than barren shadows, No one else but Christ could save us,

Who was justice for the poor, Who was rage against the night,

Who was hope for peaceful people, Who was light. Refrain

V3: Then shall we not stand empty at the altar of our dreams;

When Christ promised us ourselves, Who mark time against tomorrow,

Who are justice for the poor, Who are rage against the night,

Who are hope for peaceful people, Who are light. Refrain

**RESOURCES:**

<https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/21206/Providing-Wedding-Garments-for-Guests.htm>

<https://confidenceandjoy.com/he-got-kicked-out-of-the-wedding/>

<https://www.ncronline.org/sunday-resource/oct-11-2020-twenty-eighth-sunday-ordinary-time>



<https://www.sonomacounty.com/harvest>



<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/what-does-many-are-called-few-are-chosen-mean.html>

Cast Out -- <https://www.lewwilsonart.com/abstract?lightbox=dataItem-iw3oopiq>