

December 5th – Br. Aloysius Sarasin – Wednesday of the First Week of Advent

I think we can all agree that everyone loves to sit down to a good feast. Jesus loves to feast as well. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus sits down to many meals and invites all to join him as he eats and proclaims the Good News. In our first reading, the Prophet Isaiah is proclaiming that the Lord will provide a “feast of rich foods and choice wines.” In today’s Gospel, we hear the famous account of the feeding of the four thousand. This is just one of the many examples of the meals that Christ ate with all. All these meals, however, point to the most important meal He was to celebrate: the Last Supper. It is at the Last Supper that Christ provides us with an everlasting banquet: the Eucharist. Through the Eucharist, Christ becomes one with us in body, blood, soul, and divinity. Why? Because God desires to “feast” with us. As the Lord once feasted with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the coming of Christ restores that brokenness and separation caused by the first sin thus allowing God to feast with us again. Today’s readings remind us that the reason we are patiently waiting for the coming of Christ in this Advent season is because we also wait in joyful hope of the restoration of the “great banquet.” Through Christ and the Eucharist, we now feast with God for all eternity.

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Reading 1

Isaiah 25:6-10

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 all faces;
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.

Responsorial Psalm

PS 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6

R. (6cd) I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me;

he refreshes my soul.

R. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

He guides me in right paths

for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the dark valley

I fear no evil; for you are at my side

With your rod and your staff

that give me courage.

R. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

You spread the table before me

in the sight of my foes;

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

R. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

Only goodness and kindness follow me

all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

for years to come.

R. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

Gospel

Matthew 15:29-37

At that time:

Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee,

went up on the mountain, and sat down there.

Great crowds came to him,

having with them the lame, the blind, the deformed, the mute,

and many others.

They placed them at his feet, and he cured them.

The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking,

the deformed made whole,

the lame walking,

and the blind able to see,

and they glorified the God of Israel.

Jesus summoned his disciples and said,
"My heart is moved with pity for the crowd,
for they have been with me now for three days
and have nothing to eat.

I do not want to send them away hungry,
for fear they may collapse on the way."

The disciples said to him,
"Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place
to satisfy such a crowd?"

Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

"Seven," they replied, "and a few fish."

He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground.

Then he took the seven loaves and the fish,
gave thanks, broke the loaves,
and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.
They all ate and were satisfied.
They picked up the fragments left over—seven baskets full.