

AUGUST 22, 2019  
Memorial of the Queenship of the BVM  
Mt. 22: 1-14

“Hail, Holy Queen”

Our gospel for today illustrates what heaven is like the wedding celebration and royal feast gathering given by a king for his newly-wed son and his bride. Whatever impressive feast we can imagine on earth, heaven is the ultimate feasts, the feast of all feasts because the He, the Lord of heaven and earth invites us as members of Christ's own body, his bride the church. We are not simply bystanders or guests; we are part of the family!

On the first part of the parable of the marriage feast, the king sent out invitations in advance to the original guests, so they would have plenty of time to prepare for coming to the feast. But they refused to come: some made light of the King's request because these people put their own interests above king's own love and the intention to share his happiness to them. Their refusal constitute insult to the King and to the heir to the throne as well. The king's fury is justified because they openly refused to give the king the honor, he was due. For Jesus, this is a warning to the Jews of his day, that is, how much God wanted them to share in the joy of his kingdom, and a warning about the consequences of refusing his Son, their Messiah and Savior.

The second part of the parable focuses on an invitation of grace - undeserved, unmerited favor and kindness from God. But this invitation also contains a warning for those who respond or approach the wedding feast unworthily. God's grace is a free gift given to all of us, but it takes an awesome, dedicated and wholehearted responsibility.

Like Our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary who gave all for Her Son Jesus Christ even if it takes Her own suffering and life. But all this sacrifice, love and faithfulness lead to Her being the Queen of Heaven and Earth, the feast we celebrate today.

As early as the fourth century Saint Ephrem used the term “Queen” in praise of Mary, and Marian Hymns of the 11th to 13th centuries have phrases like “Hail, Holy Queen” and “Hail, Queen of Heaven.” “When Pius XII proclaimed this feast in 1954, he pointed out that Mary deserves the title “Queen” as the Mother of God, for three reasons: 1. her close association with Jesus’ redemptive work; 2. her preeminent perfection of holiness and 3. her intercessory power on our behalf.” *Ad Caeli Reginam*, Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on proclaiming the Queenship of Mary, Libreria Editrice Vaticana

If we notice, this feast of the Queenship of Mary is celebrated on the octave day of the feast of the Assumption. As Jesus Christ the King of the universe by serving faithfully and obeying his Father and by compassion to others, so is Mary as a queen, the handmaid of the Lord, the first disciple, faithful companion of Jesus and the mother of mercy. Her Assumption into heaven, Her reward for being the faithful and loving Mother of Jesus, so, it is also appropriate to crown Her as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, God our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord, invites each of us as his friends to his heavenly banquet, the feast of all feasts that we may celebrate with Him and share in His joy. For all of us who are faithful disciples, obedient to the Father, and dedicated our whole life to follow Jesus, heaven with Mary is our reward, too. Are we ready to feast at the Lord's banquet table? Are we ready to receive Him worthily? Let us ask the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth for us to be faithful to our calling and receive our reward, the eternal life in heaven.