

Come to the Feast

A28ORD - CMA - October 12, 2008

***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.***

In today's readings Jesus again tells us what the Kingdom of God is like.

Over the past 4 weeks he has told

- the Pharisees and elders of the people
- And us - just in case we are anything like the Pharisees and elders of the people

that the Kingdom of God is like a vineyard that has the potential - with care - to produce wonderful fruit.

This week, again in parable - Jesus compares the Kingdom to a bountiful wedding feast.

- Invitations have gone out to family and friends,
- huge amounts of time and money have been spent

But, when the RSVP cards come in - most of the invited guests have blown off the invitation.

- Some say they can't get away from work.
- Others have important family responsibilities.
- Others - just didn't want to take the time and energy to celebrate with the family.

**Rather than call off the feast -
the king broadens the guest list to include
not just a chosen few - but everybody.**

"Come to the Feast," he says.

"Come to the table of plenty.

The doors of heaven are open to all."

In telling this parable,
Jesus lets the Church leaders and
really religious people of his day know that -
**His kingdom isn't just for the chosen few -
but for all.**

Jesus wants them to know that
God has sent his servants
out into the highways and byways

- to spread the word.
- To pass out invitations and to let people know that they are welcome to share in the Feast.

This vineyard theme is also really about stewardship - answering God's call to share our time, talent in service to our parish and community.

In addition to the gifts of time and talent - **Christians are called to share their treasure.** The feast may be "without price" to those attending - **but it really isn't "free."**

As any parent who has written a check for a wedding reception knows - they do not come cheap.

Today we are going to view a video concerning **the Catholic Ministries Appeal. Its title and theme is Our Faith our Future. If you watch closely, you'll even see a few of your fellow parishioners at prayer.**

Video

Within the last few weeks, all of our registered parishioners should have received a letter and informational brochure from Bishop Clark concerning the diocesan ministries supported by the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

If you didn't receive a mailing - I've put some copies and pledge envelopes in your pews.

Through the Catholic Ministries Appeal, Catholics of the Diocese of Rochester help fund vital programs, services and ministries throughout our 12 counties.

These ministries are diocesan-wide in scope and could not be funded by any one parish.

What does it cost the Diocese of Rochester to prepare its portion of the Feast God calls us to this weekend?

Around \$10.2 million - half of which \$5.39 million - comes directly from your support for the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

Our parish's share of this year's CMA is \$23,449 That is our fair share of the cost of the many services that we receive from the diocesan church.

What kinds of ministries does the CMA support?

The ministries you have just witnessed and many more like Youth Ministry, diaconal formation, pastoral planning and Catholic Charities are all

supported by your annual pledge to the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

How much should I give?

Around the Diocese the average pledge is just about \$150 but many who can afford more - pledge more.

Likewise, parishioners on public assistance or living on fixed incomes may find giving at this level difficult.

To make it easier for everyone to give an amount that reflects a generous spirit . . .

pledges may be paid in smaller increments over the next six months.

All of this information is available in the brochure.

One last thing,

I hope you know that . . .

I will never ask you to do anything that I am not myself willing to do or support.

For many years Pat and I have made an annual pledge to the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

This year we will do so again.

Pat and I, and I know Fr. Jim, consider it a great blessing to live, worship and serve in the Diocese of Rochester .

And, we know first-hand the importance of the ministries supported by the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

Will you join in the Feast?

Will you help make it possible for others who benefit from the Catholic Ministries Appeal to join in the Feast as well?