

Deacon Randy Perkins
Isaiah 25: 6-10a
Philippians 4: 12-14, 19-20
Matthew 22: 1-14

**TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
EPIPHANY CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Louisville KY, USA
October 11, 2026

One of the most fun things about being a deacon is that I get to officiate and witness weddings. A few months ago, I witnessed a wedding for one of my daughter's best friends since elementary school. We've known the bride and her family for almost 25 years. It was a wonderful night, not just because weddings are wonderful events, but because it was a chance for my entire immediate family to be together and celebrate. Colleen (my wife), all three of our adult kids, one son's girlfriend, another son's best friend, a ton of old friends we've known for years, and others we'd never met before!

One of the nicest things about that night was that when it came time for the reception, we didn't have to prepare any of it! It was all prepared for us. Food, drinks, decorations, music! All we had to do was show up, eat, drink, socialize, and dance! And we showed up, and we did it all! It was one of the most memorable and meaningful family and friend events we've had in years.

This past week we got the newlywed couple's thank you note in the mail, and all those great memories came back to me, because in it they wrote, "We appreciate all the time, effort, and love you both sent our way, starting with the pre-wedding meetings with Randy after work to being the last people on the dance floor at the end of the reception."

And it was true! On that evening, in that moment, at that feast, we said "yes." to the invitation.

Now, a little bit of truth. If it had been left up to me, I probably would have passed. The wedding was on a Friday night. I'd worked all week and had other deacon commitments on top of preparing for the wedding ceremony. Left to my own devices, I would have come up with an excuse, or maybe even a decent reason, to pass— "I've got to prepare for Mass this weekend," or "I have another commitment after this," or "I'm just too tired."

Luckily, Colleen rarely passes on an opportunity to celebrate. So, as some of my high school students might say, "We showed up, and we showed out!"

What if we'd passed on that feast? What if we'd rejected the invitation? That's exactly what happened in today's Gospel. The king had prepared an

extraordinary wedding feast for his son. Everything was ready. The tables were set. The food was prepared. The celebration was about to begin. But no one showed up. Some ignored the invitation. Others were too busy with their farms and businesses. They had things to do, places to go, responsibilities to fulfill. They missed out on the feast.

But, as you and I know this gospel, this parable, is not *really* a story about a wedding, and it's not *really* a story about a wedding reception. It's a story about life. It's a story about God's invitation to us to celebrate life and to enjoy the feast God has created for us!

Every day God invites us to a feast, but so often we just don't show up. We get so *preoccupied* with "life" that we forget to celebrate it. We spend so much of our time either lamenting what's happened in the past or planning how we're going to control what's coming next that we fail to appreciate the feast God has prepared for us right now.

We tell ourselves things like, "I'll be happy when I retire." "I'll enjoy life when the kids are grown." "I'll have peace when my kids or my grandkids get their lives in the order I think they ought to be." "I'll relax when I get through this difficult time." And before we know it, if we're not careful, years will pass and we'll miss so many opportunities to experience the joy God placed right in front of us.

We get so wrapped up in *preparing for* life or *getting through* life that we don't actually *live* life.

I suspect many of you may have read the book or watched the movie *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom. It's the true story of a successful sportswriter who reconnects with his former college professor, Morrie Schwartz, after learning that Morrie is dying from ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease.

Mitch had a lot going on. A big career. He traveled constantly, worked long hours, always chasing the next story, the next deadline, the next accomplishment.

But every Tuesday he began visiting Morrie, who was slowly losing his ability to move. And something remarkable happened.

The man who was dying began teaching the man who was healthy how to live. Morrie had lost so much. He couldn't dance any more, and Morrie loved to dance. In time, like all ALS sufferers, he became unable to feed himself, dress himself, or even use the bathroom without help.

Yet, Morrie, confined to his bed and totally dependent on other people, was in so many ways more alive than Mitch. Because Morrie understood something Mitch had forgotten: Life is about now! Life is about embracing the feast God has prepared for us today! Life isn't about the endless chase for more. It's not about how much *we* accomplish, how much money *we* earn, or how important people think *we* are. Life is about celebrating the feast *God* has provided us!

It's about celebrating love, celebrating creation, celebrating connection with others, and being grateful for what we have.

Morrie knew his days were numbered, and that awareness helped him recognize the preciousness of every single one of them. He found joy in conversations with friends, in listening to music, in watching the world outside his window, and in the simple gift of having his friend sit beside him.

Morrie accepted God's invitation to the feast. Morrie showed up for the celebration!

The message of today's readings is beautifully simple: Life is a feast, and God has invited every one of us to the table. So, whether you're in a season of joy or sadness, love or grief; slow down, catch your breath, appreciate the people you love, find comfort in ordinary moments, and recognize that even when life brings suffering and sorrow, God is present, and in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face."

And that's the ultimate promise of the Eucharist we celebrate today: God has prepared a banquet, and everyone is invited. So don't spend life waiting for the perfect moment to be happy. Don't be so busy making a living that you forget to make a life. The table is set, the invitation is yours, and the feast has already begun. Don't miss it.