

Dear Members of our Catholic Communities,

Jesus' story in today's Gospel might seem a bit far-fetched. Who would be so crazy as to turn down an invitation to a royal wedding? But people can be very foolish. There is a streak in us that not only refuses the good, but can't even recognize it. God is continually calling us, as individuals and a community, to a deeper and more authentic life. But, alas, this precious invitation is like the seed that fell among the thorns. It gets choked. A brief look at our lives will show how this happens. There is that email I know I should write, but just now I'm not in the mood. There is that sick person I know I should visit, but right now I'm too busy. I know I should make an effort to get to Mass on time (or at all), but something always gets in the way. I know I should be more charitable to N., but I just can't summon up the will to make an effort. I know that dishonesty is wrong, but I tell myself that everybody does it. I know I don't do my job as well as I should, but why should I break my back when others aren't pulling their weight? I know I should spend more time with my children, but I need the overtime pay. The excuses that kept the invited guests from attending the wedding feast, weren't all bad. In fact, in most cases they were perfectly good ones. The greatest danger facing us is not that we might abandon God and turn to evil, but rather we might just ignore the invitation. To ignore God's invitation altogether is the worst form of refusal. It implies indifference. We are invited not merely as individuals, but as a community. It is the banquet of the new People of God, namely, the Christian community. The invitation challenges us to give up our isolationism, our exclusivism, our self-sufficiency. To accept means to admit our need and willingness to receive from others, to share with others, to associate with others, to collaborate with others. We don't have to earn our place at the banquet. We are invited.

God bless,

Father Dan