

HAVING DINNER WITH JESUS & OTHERS
22nd Sunday Ordinary Time Year C, 1st September 2019

HAVING A MEAL WITH JESUS

WHAT MUST HAVE IT BEEN LIKE – HAVING A MEAL WITH JESUS?

Who would have been there?

Was the dinner during a special religious period like the Sabbath, or the Passover, or a temple feast?

Or was it during the travels of Jesus?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE BEEN THERE?

*And if you were there, would you have been an observer,
or engaged in conversation with Jesus?*

Of course they didn't have photos, or video clips to record the occasion.
They relied on their power of memory.

Could you imagine a videographer producing a quality recording?

Or a documentary producer putting it into context?

Or print media giving it a caption to capture our attention and perhaps direct how we think?

In the four Gospels, we know that Jesus ate with disciples and followers,
and at times with opponents.

There was even large-scale catering to crowds with the miracles of the loaves and fishes.

And of course turning water into the best wine at the wedding feast in Cana.

**At meals, Jesus would invite people
into a deeper understanding of God's love at work in their own lives.
He would listen and challenge and heal and offer life to them.**

They could note his tone of voice, his concern, his joy, his compassion.

They could see his facial appearance and body language.

CONTEXT

Today's passage is part of the account of Jesus at a meal.

The text begins with an opening sentence. **Verse 1.**

There are **three main happenings at this meal.**

They are found at verses 2-6, verses 7-14, and verses 15-24.

Today's Reading is the 2nd of those happenings – **verses 7-14.**

Let us take time to reflect on all three stages of the dinner.

GOSPEL OF LUKE 14:1

Luke 14:1 introduces the dinner with these words:

*'On one occasion when Jesus
was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees
to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.'*

WERE THE HOSTS AND OTHER GUESTS HAPPY TO BE THERE?

Was it genuine hospitality?

Was it a pretense to try and trap Jesus?

PART ONE: HEALING AT THE DINNER | GOSPEL OF LUKE 14:2-6

Jesus is always concerned about us.

Out of his compassionate love, at the meal,
he healed a man who had dropsy.
Healing of this person came first.

Was he challenged by the people there because he healed on the Sabbath?

Jesus tried to engage the lawyers and Pharisees
about doing good on the Sabbath.
They were silent.

PART TWO: GOSPEL OF LUKE 14:7-14

Jesus, as teacher, changed his medium of teaching.
He noticed how they were seated,
and engaged them with the telling of a parable.
Let us find out what happened.

The Gospel says:

*‘When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour,
he told them a parable.*

*‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet,
do not sit down at the place of honour,
in case someone more distinguished than you
has been invited by your host;
and the host who invited both of you may come
and say to you, “Give this person your place”,
and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place.*

*But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place,
so that when your host comes,
he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”;
then you will be honoured in the presence
of all who sit at the table with you.*

*For all who exalt themselves will be humbled,
and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’*

*He said also to the one who had invited him,
‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner,
do not invite your friends or your brothers
or your relatives or rich neighbours,
in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid.*

*But when you give a banquet, invite the poor,
the crippled, the lame, and the blind.
And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you,
for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'*

We note the invitation of Jesus to be inclusive.

*'But when you give a banquet, invite the poor,
the crippled, the lame, and the blind.'*

And we ask ourselves –

How inclusive are we in our offering of hospitality?

PART THREE: PARABLE OF INVITATIONS TO A GREAT DINNER

LUKE 14:15-18 from the 3rd happening Luke 14:15-24

While still at the dinner,
Jesus concluded his sharing with these words of hope

*'And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you,
for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'*

Someone replied: '

Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!'

In his response Jesus began to tell a parable of a great dinner,
with this introduction,

*'Someone gave a great dinner and invited many.
At the time for the dinner he sent his slave
to say to those who had been invited,
"Come; for everything is ready now."
But they all alike began to make excuses.'* (Verses 15-18)

What excuses would we offer Jesus at dinner?

What excuses have we thought about this week?

One common excuse is *"I'm too busy"*.

It is not a new excuse.

Some people were saying this to Jesus two thousand years ago.

The third dinner happening end with an inclusive message once more.

The Archdiocese recommends to us this weekend that we raise our awareness and efforts about two very important issues;

1. Child Protection and
2. The Season of Creation.

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK September 1st - 7th

We commemorate this national week which begins today.

Our **Parish Child and Vulnerable Adult Safety Officer, Clare Kennedy**, will follow up and speak at all Masses in a fortnight.

Her contact details are on the church wall and in our printed newsletter and on our parish website.

Our policies, protection documentation, code of ethics, role descriptions, implementation strategies and other Archdiocesan resources are at the front door and sacristy daily.

Please note new information provided this week at the two tables near the front door for **National Child Protection Week**.

We are invited to take time to read them.

The whole community is responsible for the protection of our children and vulnerable adults.

When it comes to protecting our children and vulnerable adults, we need to be responsible and accountable.

We can't afford to say, 'I'm too busy'.

We are now invited to pray together the special prayer for this week.

[Pause to pray]

SEASON OF CREATION September 1st to Oct 4th | CLIMATE CHANGE

At dinner with Jesus, we could ask him about our Biblical calling to be responsible stewards in caring for our common home and for each other.

We could ask him about our **Biblical reflections on the creation**, and on our Church social teaching on Creation – **'Laudato Si' – On Care for Our Common Home'**, by Pope Francis and on possible actions concerning **climate change**.

We could ask his advice about the three forthcoming world meetings in September

1. UN Climate Action Summit 2019 September 23rd.
2. UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) Summit September 24-25
3. Mid-term review of SAMOA Pathway for small island developing States (SIDS) September 27

When it comes to caring for our common home – the earth, we need to be responsible and accountable.

We can't afford to say, *'I'm too busy'*.

NEXT WEEKEND – ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN

Available this weekend is information for next weekend's Catholic Campaign, when we pray for and contribute to, many of our Archdiocesan projects that love our neighbour and reach out as inclusive neighbours.

SHARING A MEAL WITH JESUS – AN INVITATION

You are invited this week to *sit down with Jesus over a light meal*.

Pray to Jesus, asking his blessing on this simple meal, and on your time with him.

Open today's Gospel passage and read it peacefully at the beginning of the meal.

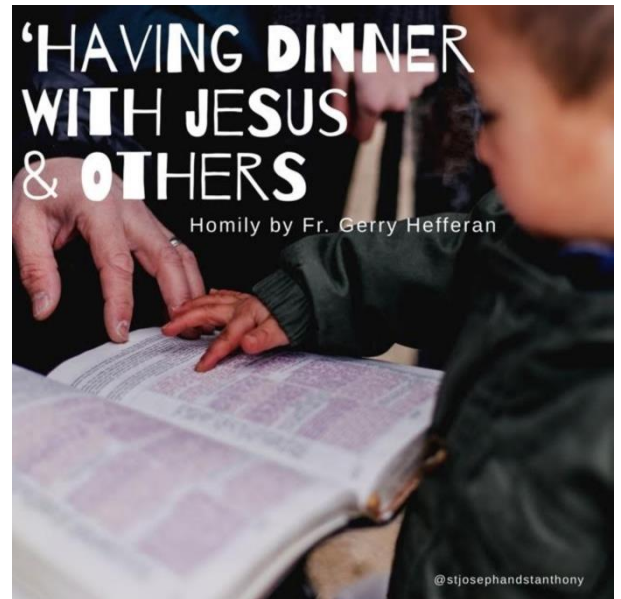
Pause for a while and ponder and slowly eat and drink.

Appreciate the tastes of what you eat, and what you sip.

Appreciate the food as a background to your time with Jesus.

Appreciate not having to rush.

Encounter the presence of Jesus around you.
Ponder the call to be more inclusive in your life.
Be open to Jesus surprising you.
Finish in thanksgiving to God.



Invite another to share with you a light meal with Jesus.

Take it in turns reading a few lines from Luke 14. And follow the passage above.

If your family consent, *share a family meal with Jesus*.
And adapt the process to your family.

We joyfully thank God for our newest adult members of the community with Andrew and Craig baptised last night at 6pm Mass, and receiving the *Sacrament of Confirmation*, and receiving Jesus at their *First Communion*.

We now invite all our Dads, and Grandfathers, and those with a fatherly influence in their family to please stand as our parish family prays over you.

Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/090119.cfm>]