

EXCUSE ME FROM THE BANQUET

One day, the Lord Jesus told this parable. (A parable is a story with a special meaning.) He said, "Once a man gave a big banquet. (A banquet is a big meal.) He invited many people to come to the banquet.

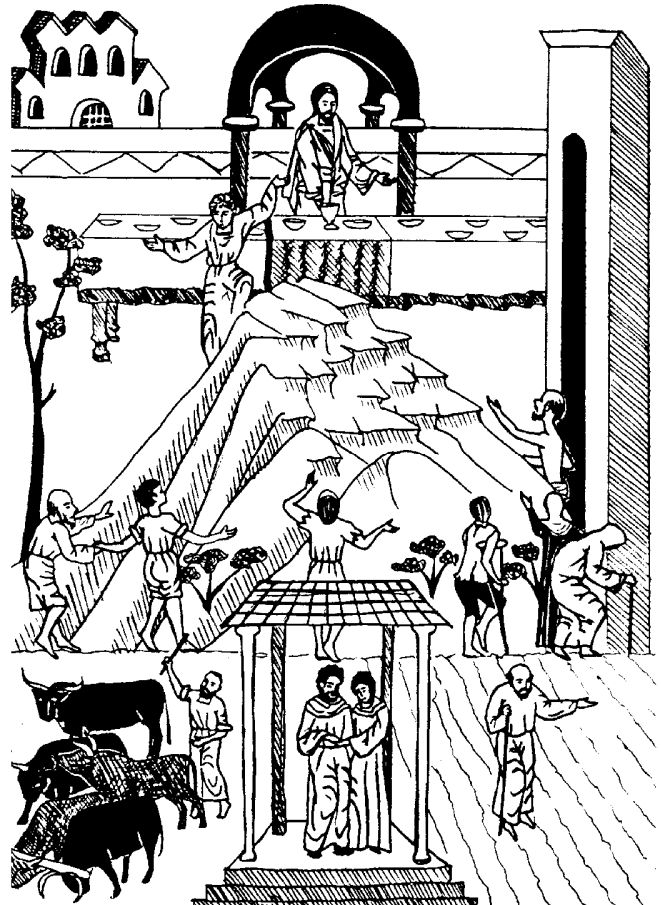
"The day of the banquet came. The man sent his servant to tell the people who were invited that the banquet was ready and they should come. The servant went all over town to talk to all the people who had been invited.

"Every person had an excuse. One said he had to watch over his new field. Another said he wanted to go see the animals he had just bought. A third had just gotten married and couldn't come.

"None of the invited people would come to the banquet!

"When the servant told his master this, the man was angry. He told the servant to go out into the streets and alleys of the city. He said his servant should bring the poor, the hurt, the blind, and those who couldn't walk.

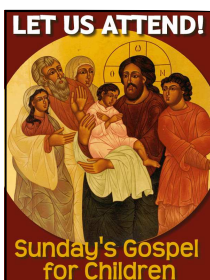
"The servant did that, but there was still room for more people. When he told his master, the man said, 'Then go to the highways and make the people come in! I want my house to be full! And none of those that I invited will eat this banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Have you ever gone to a banquet like the one in this story?
2. Why did the master send his servant out on the day of the banquet?
3. Did anyone come? Why or why not?
4. When the invited people didn't come, who did?
5. God invites each of us to a banquet every Sunday. It is Holy Communion. We should not have excuses like, "I don't want to get out of bed," or "I want to stay home and watch TV."
6. Do you come to God's banquet or are you like of the invited guests who had excuses not to?



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Materials:

- * an example of an invitation to a party
- * white drawing paper, folded into a card
- * crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers
- * clip art, if desired

Procedure:

1. After reading the Gospel story to your child, take time to review the discussion questions following the story.
2. Remind your child that Jesus invites us to come to church every Sunday and take Holy Communion. Discuss with your child why we should accept this invitation and go to church as often as we can.
3. Show your child an example of an invitation. Explain how we receive invitations when someone wants us to come to their party. Show your child how it gives information about the party in the card. Tell your child that they will be making an invitation to come to church.
4. Ahead of time, write the following words on the inside of the invitation: What?, When?, Where?, Why?
5. On the front of the card, help your child print the following words: "You are Invited!"
6. On the inside of the card, discuss the answers to the 4 "W" questions. Help your child print the correct answers on the lines beside the question words or print the words for your child after they provide the answers. For example:

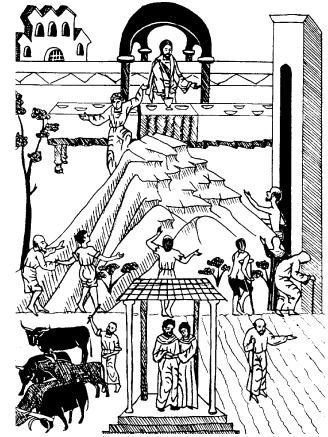
What? Divine Liturgy

When? Sunday morning

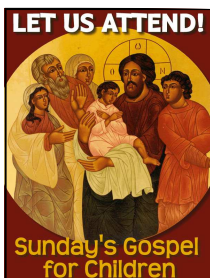
Where? (your church name)

Why? to take Holy Communion and be closer to God

7. When this part of the card is completed, allow your child to decorate the invitation with church related drawings (examples: church building, the chalice, the priest, icons, Jesus, etc.) Instead of drawing, you may choose to visit the following website to print out clip art for your child to glue on their invitation: <http://dce.oca.org/resources/line-drawings/>



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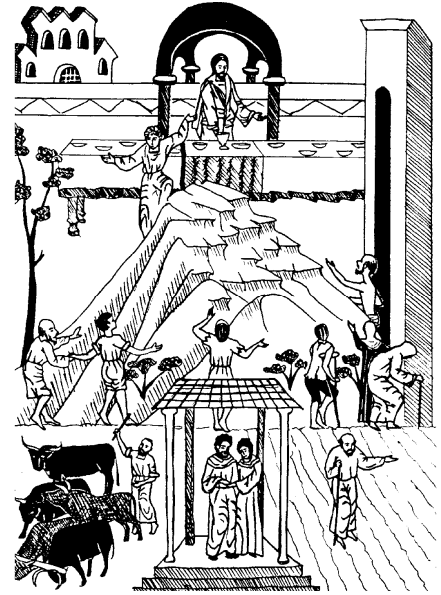
"The day of the banquet came. The man sent his servant to tell the people who were invited that the banquet was ready and they should come. The servant went all over town to talk to all the people who had been invited.

"Every person had an excuse. One said he had to watch over his new field. Another said he wanted to go see the animals he had just bought. A third had just gotten married and couldn't come.

"None of the invited people would come to the banquet!

"When the servant told his master this, the man was angry. He told the servant to go out into the streets and alleys of the city. He said his servant should bring the poor, the hurt, the blind, and those who couldn't walk.

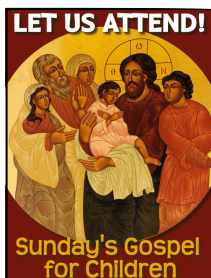
"The servant did that, but there was still room for more people. When he told his master, the man said, 'Then go to the highways and make the people come in! I want my house to be full! And none of those that I invited will eat this banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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“But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So the servant came and reported this to his master.

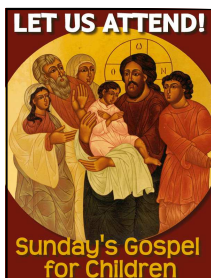
“Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.’”



Image courtesy of Teaching Pics

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What is a parable?
2. Who tells this parable? Can you remember any other parables He told?
3. What is the point of this parable?
4. Have you ever been to a banquet? What did you enjoy the best?
5. What “banquet” are you invited to every week during Divine Liturgy? Why is this an important “banquet” to attend?
6. What excuses have you used (or thought about using) to not come to the “banquet”?



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Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Servant, Person 1,
Person 2, Groom, Master

Narrator: The Lord spoke this parable,

Jesus: A man once gave a great banquet,
and invited many; and at the time
for the banquet he sent his servant
to say to those who had been in-
vited,

Servant: Come, for all is now ready.

Jesus: But, one by one, they all began to
make excuses. The first said to him,

Person 1: I have bought a field, and I must go
out and see it; I pray you, have me
excused.

Narrator: And another said,

Person 2: I have bought five yoke of oxen, and
I go to examine them; I pray you,
have me excused.

Narrator: And another said,

Man: I have married a wife, and therefore
I cannot come.

Jesus: So the servant came and reported
this to his master.

Then the householder in anger said
to his servant,

Master: Go out quickly to the streets and
lanes of the city, and bring in the
poor and maimed and blind and
lame.

Narrator: And the servant said,

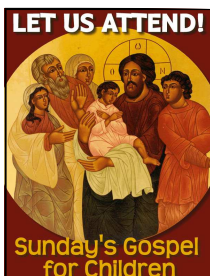
Servant: Sir, what you commanded has been
done, and still there is room.

Narrator: And the master said to the servant,

Master: Go out to the highways and hedges,
and compel people to come in, that
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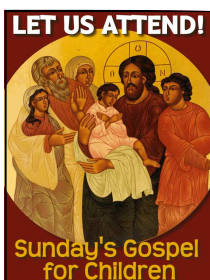
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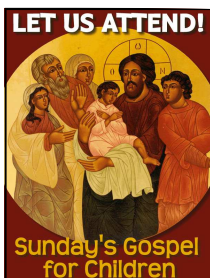
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