



St Marylebone  
Parish Church

## Trinity 2 2020 8.30 am

*1 John 3.13-end (Sermon) & Luke 14.16-24 (Sermon)*

*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Our readings this morning complement each other beautifully. In our Gospel reading, Jesus tells one of his fellow guests at supper a parable about the Heavenly Banquet: shorthand for that time and place in which God's Kingdom is fulfilled and God is all in all.

Everyone, says Jesus, is invited!

It is not, of course, the only time that Jesus suggests this, but whenever Jesus talks about it, he causes huge offence amongst those with whom he is speaking.

“What you mean everyone! This Heavenly Banquet is for us, God's Chosen People, certainly not for anyone else. Who are you, jumped up Carpenter-from-Nazareth, to rewrite the Covenant promises between God and those whom he has set aside out of all nations and peoples on earth?”

It is a theme which colours almost every page of the book of the Acts of the Apostles as Peter and James and Paul and

Barnabas and the other apostles struggle to get their heads around the fact that God's once-seemingly exclusive invitation to a particular people, through the death and Resurrection of Christ is now open to everyone, everywhere.

Jesus' is God's clear and unequivocal invitation to everyone to come to his Father's Banquet.

Everyone is invited to join in the celebrations of God's Kingdom; everyone is invited to share the broken bread which is Christ's Body and the cup of wine which is his Blood; everyone is invited to share the fellowship of God's Kingdom whether they are Jew or Gentile, Black or White, Male or Female, Parthian, Mede or Elamite, resident of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, or Phrygia; be they Pamphylian, Egyptian, come from parts of Libya near Cyrene; are visitors from Rome; be they Cretan or Arab!

And this is where our first reading comes into play, for, if everyone is welcome how do people know they are invited; how do they get their invitation?

As St John reminds his readers, we, the men and women who have passed from death to life through Baptism are the invitation. For, unless others can really and truly perceive the invitation which is the love of God at work in our lives why would anyone want to become part of God's Kingdom?

For whilst God has issued his unequivocal invitation in Christ Jesus, we are now the living stones who make up his Church, we are the men and women who are Christ's Body and Blood, his hands, his feet, his lips.

If we keep God commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. If we not only profess with our lips but show forth in our lives that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, the world will know and feel and see that God's invitation is one worth receiving and opening and exploring and living until the day comes when we will all sit down together in God's eternal Kingdom. Amen.