



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE
DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAЕ

The priceless invitation to the banquet

Tuesday, 5 November 2013

(by *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly ed. in English, n. 45, 8 November 2013)

In his homily at Holy Mass on Tuesday, November 5, Pope Francis commented on the Readings for today's liturgy taken from St Paul's Letter to the Romans (12:5-16a) and from the Gospel of St Luke (14:15-24), in which Jesus teaches his disciples about the Christian call to the Kingdom of God through the parable of "a man who once gave a great banquet, and invited many".

The Readings for the day's liturgy, the Pope said, "show us the Christian's ID card... the Christian life is an invitation: we can only become Christians if we are invited". It is "a free invitation" which comes from God. Therefore, the Holy Father added, we cannot say: "I'll buy the ticket at the door!". In fact, he continued, this is quite impossible. "We cannot pay to enter; either you are invited or you may not enter. And if in our conscience we are not sure if we have been invited, then we have not understood what a Christian is. We are invited freely, through the pure grace of God, through the Father's pure love. For it was Jesus who, by his blood, opened this possibility for us".

God's mercy, the Pontiff said, reaches even to those who decline the invitation or pretend to accept it but do not truly participate in the feast. Listing the excuses given by those in the parable who were too occupied to attend, Pope Francis said: "They participate in the banquet in name

only, but they do not truly accept the invitation”.

“They say yes,” but they really mean no. He likened the invited guests in the Gospel to “Christians who are content to remain on the guest list”. Unfortunately, he said, “being listed as a Christian is not enough... If you do not enter into the banquet, you are not a Christian; you will be on the list, but this does not help your salvation”.

Pope Francis concluded his homily by exhorting those present to pray for the grace to understand “how beautiful it is to be invited to the banquet, how beautiful it is to share one's gifts with others, how beautiful it is to be with God” and to the contrary, what a pity it is “to vacillate between yes and no; to say yes, but to content ourselves” with only remaining on the guest list.