

## **STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL -- FOLLOWING JESUS**

**15 October 2017 [28<sup>th</sup> Sun. A, Stewardship 1]**

Jesus tells a story in the Gospel about a man who came to a wedding reception without the proper garment for such an occasion (Matthew 22:1-14). In the story, the man without the right clothes was invited in an attempt to fill the hall since the original invitees either refused to come or ignored the invitation. We might wonder why wearing the right clothes was so important, after all, at least the man came.

Yes, he showed up. The problem is that is all he did. The fact that he did not come properly dressed meant that all he cared about was a free meal and a full stomach. Making an effort to wear the appropriate clothes was symbolic of his willingness to contribute something to the banquet. Wearing the proper garment was important because it expressed his willingness to give to the banquet as well as to take from it.

As we begin our parish wide stewardship renewal this weekend, the Gospel story reminds us that following Jesus means, in addition to receiving, we are also to give. The Church does not exist just to fill up buildings with people. Our presence at Mass is to be matched by lives clothed with generosity in sharing what we have to help carry out the mission of Jesus in our parish and our world. Through our participation at Mass and in our parish, we can help each other to clothe our hearts with love, mercy, forgiveness, care and compassion which are so needed in our troubled world.

On the weekend of Nov. 4- 5, we will be invited to consider what portion of our financial resources we will generously share to support the work and ministry of Christ Cathedral Parish. In these next two weeks, we will reflect on the importance of living the mission of Jesus in our lives which will ultimately lead to each of us making a real difference in our world.

Every Sunday we are invited to participate in the Eucharistic Banquet clothed with lives of generous love. May these weeks of stewardship renewal be a time of rededicating ourselves to clothing our hearts with such generous love.

Together in faith,  
Very Rev. Christopher Smith, Rector