28th,  Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Isaiah 25:6-10

Psalm 23

Philippians 4:12-14,19-20

Matthew 22:1-14

These readings are getting me hungry – a feast of rich food and choice wines, a feast of roasted beef, a picnic on the mountain plain near a brook of restful waters. Yum!

How do I get there? Gotta climb a mountain. Not as easy as it seems. It’s a dangerous climb - this climb of a lifetime.

The Lord will show me the way. He will be with me all the way, even through the dark valleys. After all, what is life if not with pitfalls. On the climb I can twist an ankle or break a limb. I could face illness or mental distress or even cancer. A lot of happenings that could wear me down or even tempt me to lose hope and want to turn back.

But God has prepared a feast for me. I have to keep my eye on the prize. My climb up the mountain of life is not as difficult as the one Jesus took. He faced hard times too. Sometimes he was left abandoned on his trek. He even faced torture and ridicule along the way. Climbing up his mountain, he even carried a cross across his shoulders. He made it, however. He had faith in a God who loved him. He wanted to go back home no matter how hard the climb was for him.

On my climb, I know I will not be left alone or led astray. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, I shall not want. He will lead me to green pastures; wipe away all tears from my face; fill me with courage; and see to it that only goodness and kindness will follow me all the days of my life.

Only I can make the climb harder for myself. I could take trails that can lead me astray. Even then, he will provide for me reconciliation and mercy if I confess that I strayed. If I fill my backpack with prayer, I fill my soul with courage. If I want for nourishment on my climb, he lays before me a table of Holy Communion.

He is my good shepherd. All I need is to call out and He will be there to guide me on the right track. I shall not want. On the climb, He leads me to rest in green fields. If I get depressed on the hard portion of the climb, He wipes away my tears and refreshes my soul. Even though I may have to walk through scary potions of the climb, I will fear no evil because my shepherd, good that He is, will stand by me at my side.

The hardest part of my climb up the mountain is seeing the feast prepared for me of rich food and choice wines on that mountain top. The final part of the trek is realizing that the very last step is a step that takes me through my dying and my death. It gives me pause. I believe, however, that my God will fully supply all that I need to pass through the veil of death. I can do all things in Him who strengthens me. I’m so afraid of that last step that He will have to drag me kicking and screaming with his rod and his staff. I let Him. He gives me courage. My eyes are on Him who will not lead me astray. He loves me and will love me to life again.

Hopefully, when I fall though that threshold, He will raise me up on eagle’s wings.

And then when I reach the mountain top I can say, “Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the Lord for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that He has saved us! For the hand of the Lord will rest on this His mountain.”

Let the feast begin.