

The Gospel of the day

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Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? 7 JULY (Mt 9,14-17)

The Singer of God as the bridegroom of Israel is the prophet Hosea. His words reveal all the depth of the love of God towards his people. It is a highly spousal love.

I will espouse you to me forever: I will espouse you in right and in justice, in love and in mercy; I will espouse you in fidelity, and you shall know the Lord. On that day I will respond, says the Lord; I will respond to the heavens, and they shall respond to the earth; The earth shall respond to the grain, and wine, and oil, and these shall respond to Jezreel. I will sow him for myself in the land, and I will have pity on Lo-ruhama. I will say to Lo-ammi, "You are my people," and he shall say, "My God!" (Cfr. Hosea 2.16-25).

In Ezekiel, the painful condition Israel was in before being chosen as the bride of his Lord, Creator, and God; is manifested:

Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations. Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem: By origin and birth you are of the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. As for your birth, the day you were born your navel cord was not cut; you were neither washed with water nor anointed, nor were you rubbed with salt, nor swathed in swaddling clothes. No one looked on you with pity or compassion to do any of these things for you. Rather, you were thrown out on the ground as something loathsome, the day you were born. Then I passed by and saw you weltering in your blood. I said to you: Live in your blood and grow like a plant in the field. You grew and developed, you came to the age of puberty; your breasts were formed, your hair had grown, but you were still stark naked. Again I passed by you and saw that you were now old enough for love. So I spread the corner of my cloak over you to cover your nakedness; I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you; you became mine, says the Lord God. Then I bathed you with water, washed away your blood, and anointed you with oil. I clothed you with an embroidered gown, put sandals of fine leather on your feet; I gave you a fine linen sash and silk robes to wear. I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms, a necklace about your neck, a ring in your nose, pendants in your ears, and a glorious diadem upon your head. Thus you were adorned with gold and silver; your garments were of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. Fine flour, honey, and oil were your food. You were exceedingly beautiful, with the dignity of a queen. You were renowned among the nations for your beauty, perfect as it was, because of my splendor which I had bestowed on you, says the Lord God. But you were captivated by your own beauty, you used your renown to make yourself a harlot, and you lavished your harlotry on every passer-by, whose own you became. You took the splendid gold and silver ornaments that I had given you and made for yourself male images, with which also you played the harlot. You took your embroidered gowns to cover them; my oil and my incense you set before them; the food that I had given you, the fine flour, the oil, and the honey with which I fed you, you set before them as an appeasing odor, says the Lord God. (Ez 16,1-19).

Jesus declares himself husband of his disciples, of the future Church that in and for him will be built on our earth. He is the true bridegroom of humanity, for whose salvation he has shed his blood on the Cross. This is a highly inexpressible mystery.

Then the disciples of John approached him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast (much), but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and

then they will fast. No one patches an old cloak with a piece of unshrunk cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

The Gospel of John confirms this truth, which is essence and substance of the New Covenant. The marriage makes us one body, and one life with Jesus.

John answered and said, "No one can receive anything except what has been given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said (that) I am not the Messiah, but that I was sent before him. The one who has the bride is the bridegroom; the best man, who stands and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made complete. He must increase; I must decrease." (Jn 3,25-30).

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption; Angels and Saints, make us real brides of Jesus.