



## FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS October 2017

# *Responding to the invitation*

The follow-up sessions are published monthly until October 2018. The sessions help participants in the process of the V Encuentro to reflect and continue to live as missionary disciples.

## *See*

1. How do we prepare to respond to the invitation of the Lord who reaches out to us and, in turn, reach out to others?
2. What are the groups or persons we reach out in order to invite and accompany them in the process of Encuentro?
3. What was difficult and what was pleasant about this experience?

## *Illuminate: Mathew 23:1-14*

Jesus again spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come. A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: "Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready: come to the feast.'" Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants: 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find. The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. He said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hand and feet and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' Many are invited, but few are chosen."

Jesus always invites us to a great banquet, a generous feast. But sometimes we look for excuses not to go, fearing perhaps that responding will later demand some commitment from us. Or maybe that this action will require us to reach out to others, "out of our comfort zones." We might be afraid of being rejected. Sometimes we even convince ourselves that our excuses are justified...lack of time, need to do something else, negative past experiences. Going to the banquet, however, and being in the company of others is something really great. As the vision presented in the first reading today indicates: rejoicing, comfort, joy. The call is to be open, prepared, ready to go into that lavish abundance and hospitality of God.

# Delve into the Word

In silence listen to the voice of Jesus within your heart.

With which words of this reading do you identify?

To what is Jesus inviting you today?



## Live the Word

- To what great work and feast do I feel called to when invited to Encuentro? Have I ever tried to come up with excuses?
- How can I prepare to respond to such a great invitation? What would have to change in my life or in my heart so that I can do that?
- Do I choose whom to invite, or do I let God guide my way, even if the people I may meet are very different from me?

## Celebrate

L/ Lord Jesus, thank you for your invitation to your feast.

R/ To God, our Father, glory for ever and ever.

L/ When the invitation frightens me and I try to escape, show me your strength and consolation.

R/ To God, our Father, glory for ever and ever.

L/ Jesus, you don't make distinctions in your invitation. Help me to go out of my comfort zone.

R/ To God, our Father, glory for ever and ever.

L/ Open, Lord, my heart to your call and your sending me; help me to prepare and to be dressed in the wedding garment you desire. Give me a grateful and joyful heart to show everyone the greatness of your hospitality. Amen.

## Mission – “Taking the first Step”



If you find it hard to reach out to people whom you don't know or who are different, look for someone to accompany you and prepare to greet them with a smile and show the interest of God who loves them as you cannot even imagine. You don't need to speak much, but simply to be there and to listen to whatever they might want to communicate to you.