

Bounty

“Where do you want us to prepare the Passover supper for you?” the disciples asked him.

Mark’s gospel shares that Jesus directed two of them to go into the city where they would find a man carrying a water jar.

Jesus said, “Follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner, “The Teacher has asked where is my guestroom? I want to eat the Passover meal there with my disciples.”

Jesus then tells them that they would be shown an upstairs room, spacious, furnished, with everything in order.

“That is the place you are to get ready for us,” Jesus said.

And so the disciples went off to the city, found it just as Jesus had told them, and they prepared the meal.

The place, spacious, furnished...everything in order.

While creating an experience of bounty and abundance can be spontaneous, it often begins with preparing ahead. In preparing the space, furnishings for the guests, the food to be eaten, the gathering of the best wines, the host signals the heart of welcome, hospitality, the message of care and love that there’s plenty for everyone.

Christine Paintner writes, “The sacred art of feasting invites us to savor God with all of our senses. We often hear the injunction to look and listen for God, but in a meal we get to taste, smell, and touch the sacred as well. (Paintner, 123).

We know Jesus went often to meals and has been described by some as possessing a ‘feast-centered ethic.’ Theologian David Ford so beautifully describes that Jesus turns water into wine and sits at the table with those who have been outcast. The parable of the prodigal son culminates with a grand feast in celebration of the lost child returning home again. And then Jesus shares a Last Supper with his disciples, a feast we repeat in our own monthly rhythms.

Reflecting on feasting and bounty, I find my spirit ill at ease, knowing there are so many of our sisters, brothers and children, particularly in E Africa right now, who are starving. Should anyone be feasting?

Indeed, we are called to share our food so that all might be fed and also to keep hope alive in God's possibilities for this world through our celebration and our inclusion of everyone at the feast.

Therefore let us keep the feast!

Reference from Christine Paintner and David Ford comes from, Water, Wind, Earth, & Fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements.