

It's so good to see you here in the flesh, as it were – and appropriately clothed. The weather may not be the same here as in Jerusalem but we are under desert skies and there's a sense that the good times are over and we live once again in exile, a little lost and not knowing where to go next. Many of us have survived in this desert by resorting to social media, masses online and 'zoom' meetings and these are ways of staying connected but they're not the full reality, not fully incarnated, one might say. We can give thanks to God for them but full thanks can only take place in a Eucharist at which we are physically present, which fully expresses the enfleshed nature of being church, which says in a very clear and dramatic way that we are part of one body when we share the body and blood of Christ; when, indeed, we bring ourselves to this altar and become what we share. For the wedding of the Son is God's wedding with us and we're here, not only as guests, as onlookers, but as bride: without us there can be no wedding. In a way, then, this Eucharist completes God's incarnation. Jesus is made flesh that we might be made divine. So, refusing to come to this wedding is to spurn God's love – hence the double invitation. Don't you realise what you're missing, what you're turning away from, when you refuse to come? When you choose, instead, to remain entirely enfleshed concerned only with a passing world? But the chilling example of the man at the end who comes improperly dressed is a warning that the invitation is not a denial of earth's goodness but an invitation to sanctify creation to the full. The clothing we are to put on are all the acts of love shown by us to this material reality, to its people, indeed, to all the nations of the earth, good and bad alike. It's a wedding of the material and the divine so that what is passing can share in God's eternal life and, in this sense, overcome death. We are, then, being called by Christ to enjoy one another fully, and all meals together are a token of this; an insight into what it might mean to meet God, one day, face to face. And we meet one another now, face to face, in thanksgiving for God's gift to us of one another.

Br John Mayhead  
Monastery of Christ Our Saviour