

Christmas: January 7th

Gospel text (Jn 2,1-12): There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples. When all the wine provided for the celebration had been served and they had run out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, «They have no wine». Jesus replied, «Woman, what concern is that to you and me? My hour has not yet come». However His mother said to the servants, «Do whatever he tells you».

Nearby were six stone water jars meant for the ritual washing as practiced by the Jews; each jar could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, «Fill the jars with water». And they filled them to the brim. Then Jesus said, «Now draw some out and take it to the steward». So they did. The steward tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing from where it had come; for only the servants who had drawn the water knew. So, he called the bridegroom to tell him, «Everyone serves the best wine first and when people have drunk enough, he serves that which is ordinary. Instead you have kept the best wine until the end».

This miraculous sign was the first, and Jesus performed it at Cana in Galilee. In this way He let his Glory appear and his disciples believed in Him. After this, Jesus went down to Capernaum with His mother, His brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there for a few days.

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Today, reading helps us to consider the blessings that come when we enjoy the presence of Jesus and his Mother, Mary, in the midst of human events, such as the one we are contemplating: «There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples» (Jn 2:1-2).

With differing degrees of power, Jesus and Mary call us into the presence of God wherever they are, and, where God is, there is found love, grace, and wonders, because God is goodness, truth, beauty, all in abundance. At sunrise, the darkness of night is driven away, and the earth is warmed. Thereby, life is encouraged and nourished, making both human existence and nature fruitful. Similarly, when we allow God to arise in our hearts, we know the blessings of peace and happiness, even when we have been unreceptive or spiritually asleep.

Jesus Christ is sent by God to be present with us, and to communicate with us in divinely profound ways. God's deeds enter our hearts through Jesus Christ's humanity, and through Mary's presence, and the results are as surprising and pleasant as the experience of the host who did not know who he had invited to the wedding, but who, nevertheless, received unexpected blessings from the presence of Mary and Jesus, an invitation that might have been due to ties of kinship or friendship.

Before He changed the water into wine, Jesus had not performed any miracles, and there were few who really knew who He was or the significance of His mission. He went to the wedding because He is in favour of intimate human relationships, and because the integrity and devotion of the family attracted him. By his attendance, Jesus introduced God into what otherwise was an unremarkable family celebration. «This miraculous sign was the first, and Jesus performed it at Cana in Galilee» (Jn 2:11) and it was also there where the Messiah «opened his disciples' hearts to the faith, thanks to Mary, the first believer» (John Paul II).

Let us, by exercising our faith, move closer to this example of the human behavior of Jesus, thus coming to know and imitate his human dimension as far as we can, learning to love more and more, as we listen to his word, ever growing in faith and trust, until we come to see the face of the Father in him.