February 11th: Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

Gospel text (*Jn* 2:1-11): There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from — although the servers who had drawn the water knew —, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.”

Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

“Do whatever he tells you”

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Today is the feast of our Lady of Lourdes. In the Gospel Jesus is the central character, but He provides his mother with a humble role as He daily does in Lourdes, in everything that happens there. Invited to a wedding party with his disciples, Jesus, there, makes his first "sign". Mary, tactfully, realizes the need of the new spouses, and prudently lets Jesus know, by pleading for them: "They have no wine" (Jn 2:3). While Jesus’ answer seems rather evasive, not to say negative, Mary, all the same, warns the servants "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:,5). She did not know what Jesus would do, but she was probably thinking: whatever He does, He will do his best! And she was right

The outcome is already well known: the messianic abundance of the "best wine" that makes the master of

the banquet to be surprised and the disciples to reaffirm their faith in Jesus.

I would like to highlight the usefulness of the simple presence of Mary in that wedding feast: with feminine thoughtfulness, she realizes what is missing, and prudently she shares it with her son. This is the beautiful undertaking of Mary in our lives and in the Church. Let us recall here Pope Francis' words on the role of Mary, and of women in general, in the Church: "The woman is essential for the church. Mary, a woman, is more important than the bishops. The feminine genius is needed wherever we make important decisions".

In the Church, in our families, in our personal lives, there are many shortcomings that Mary discovers and bestows upon Jesus; and her mediation is always effective! The woman is meant to provide a similar function

But it is necessary to invite Jesus and Mary to participate in our lives. And, most than all, it is also necessary to do whatever Jesus tells us to.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- «En medio del júbilo de la fiesta, en Caná, sólo María advierte la falta de vino... Hasta los detalles más pequeños de servicio llega el alma si, como Ella, se vive pendiente del prójimo, por Dios» (San Josemaría)

- «En el Rosario, tan querido para Bernadette y los peregrinos en Lourdes, se concentra la profundidad del mensaje evangélico. Nos introduce en la contemplación del rostro de Cristo. De esta oración de los humildes podemos sacar copiosas gracias» (Benedicto XVI)

- «El Evangelio nos revela cómo María ora e intercede en la fe: en Caná (cf. Jn 2,1-12) la madre de Jesús ruega a su hijo por las necesidades de un banquete de bodas, signo de otro banquete, el de las bodas del Cordero que da su Cuerpo y su Sangre a petición de la Iglesia, su Esposa. Y en la hora de la nueva Alianza, al pie de la Cruz, María es escuchada como la Mujer, la nueva Eva, la verdadera 'madre de los que viven'» (Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, nº 2.618)