

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today we begin the ordinary season of the year. Today's readings tell us about the identity of Jesus, who he is and what his mission is. We need to know who Jesus is and understand his mission, if we want to be his true disciples. We respond to God's love through lives that encourage forgiveness and reconciliation.

The Gospel presents to us the first miracle performed by Jesus at a wedding. A wedding is a time of abundance and celebration. From the food and wine that are served, to the music and dancing that follow, weddings overflow with goodness of life. At a deeper level, weddings speak about love, compassion and unity. Wedding feast at Cana is a sign of God's love and compassion. Here Jesus takes care of the family, who is about to be pushed into a state of humiliation. At the same time, he accepts the word of Mary to do a good act and bless the family in abundance. The abundance of the wedding is a taste of what God provides for us at the Eucharistic table.

In the Gospel we see Jesus, his mother and his disciples at a wedding. Jewish weddings of those days could last a week. This was a time of grand celebration and Jesus and Mary along with the disciples were part of it. The message today is very clear: Jesus brings joy and he shares in the joys of others. He wants that our religion is meant to be a joy-filled experience. Christian joy is a sign of being fully alive. St. Irenaeus says "The glory of God is a person, who is fully alive." Today's story is indeed a great revelation of God's presence and activity in our midst. He worked this first miracle in order to give a temporal favor, an earthly gift to save a newly married groom from humiliation.

The action of Jesus turning water into wine is the first of the seven signs that Jesus performed and recorded in the Gospel of John. On the surface signs appear to be miracles but John presents them with a particular purpose. As signs these miracles have a strong symbolic significance that tells us about Jesus and also his messianic work. Each miracle reveals the messianic sign of Jesus the messiah who is the full revelation of God to us. He is word that has become flesh for the sake of humanity. John never speaks of these signs as Jesus' 'miracles' but

he calls them ‘signs’, pointing to God’s power and love at work in Jesus. A sign is generally a thing that points to a new idea or vision. In the wedding feast of Cana, the sign is that Jesus turns the water in six large stone jars used for Jewish purification rites, into very good wine. Here we have Jesus who saves the people from humiliation and at the same time listens to Mary and performs the miracle for a humble poor family.

The miracle of today is to reveal a God in Jesus who is so generous that he sometimes scares us by his outgoing love. His generosity is overwhelming and sometimes it is difficult for us to comprehend. And all this happens, in the context of a wedding banquet. In the New Testament, Church, the Christian community is the Bride of Christ. In the Letter to the Ephesians this “marriage” is linked to human marriage, of which, it is a model. Jesus’ followers are called upon to experience his generosity and the Gospel of John tells us that they began to believe through the sign he performed in front of them. Here we see the power and majesty of Jesus. He performs the miracle for them and takes care of the chosen disciples. He has told us to ask and we shall receive. This is certain that he will always answer our prayer. The kind act of Jesus tells us that, he is involved with our entire life and not spiritual life alone. It also tells us that it becomes easier when we approach him through Mary our Mother.

The Eucharist is a sign of God’s constant presence, where he makes us generous with his love, and strengthens our love, so that, it can become our real paschal meal. Let us make every Sunday Eucharist a special meal to share with one another as Jesus did. Let it bring to us, a sense of togetherness with those around us or strangers who happen to be present with us. Finally, we know that Mary was there present at the wedding of Cana. Her intervention saved the day. Her words to the servants are still highly meaningful for us: “Do whatever he tells you.” Mary here really represents the Church and it is through the Church that Christ comes into our lives and through the Church that we go to him. Much more, it is about living as a Christian today and every day. Let us reflect upon our active involvement in the Body of Christ and pray that, by the grace of God, we may always persevere in our living faith as shining lights.