

Homily **Second Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C** (20.1.19)

Our task as servants -

“We have to grace situations that we may transform their water into wine (& bring to those situations) the joy of God, & His overflowing grace.”

You know, when you approach John's gospel, you forget what a genius he was and how he wove different layers in the message of Christ and his life, so much so, there are rich veins going off in different directions. It's so hard to even unravel and Cana is no different. The symbolism, the connections are so powerful. So there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Jesus and His disciples were invited. And of course, this is the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy, that Jesus is the true bridegroom coming to claim his bride, Israel, and he comes with his church, his disciples. The presence of God is symbolized in that new Israel that comes to this wedding.

And his mother was invited also, and of course John treats Jesus' mother as the anonymous disciple. She's never mentioned again 'til the foot of the cross, the beginning and the end. She's at the beginning and the end of all that Jesus does, and that's the true disciple. And then we have that lovely symbolism:

"Do whatever He tells you" she says to the servants.

We could be those servants told to obey Jesus.

And then we have the six stone water jars. It's very interesting, meant for the ablutions, because the perfect number in ancient Israel was the prime number seven. So this is a symbol that the old was inadequate, and that Jesus completes the old and makes it a perfect representation of God. And he says, "Fill the jars."

And the jars were filled to the brim. There was this sense of flowing over, getting to the number seven. It needs another container to hold all this water. And of course John has the perfect number in his gospel. John gives seven signs of the glory of Jesus, the perfect number, and this is the first. But his

gospel only contains seven signs, or symbols. And of course, the church picked up this with the seven sacraments.

But the thing I'd like to just focus on very briefly, are the servants, because this has a powerful message for us. We've listened to the story as it's happened, but the servants are about us and how we benefit from that. So he said to the servants,

"Draw some of the water and take it to the steward."

These are the servants who dispense grace, because the wine of course is a symbol of the joy of God and the grace of God overflowing as a gift to humanity. Now the servants administer, we don't take it. The steward didn't just come and take it, and that's why at Communion of course and all the sacraments, they're administered. We don't take, we cannot assume we can take God's grace. We have to wait for it to be given to us freely.

So we don't put a plate there with the consecrated hosts and the chalice there so that we could all help ourselves. It could be done like that, but it would be so inappropriate, because it would lose the powerful symbolism that God gives to us. Even the priest has to say an awful prayer that would frighten the pants off you before he receives communion. If you see if a priest does it right, you can tell him off if he doesn't. He should bend over when receiving the host to show he's unworthy and administering to himself. The priest says something. I always forget it and I have to read it,

'Lord Jesus Christ let this not bring me judgement and condemnation', but bring mercy on my soul.

He says this private prayer to show how unworthy he is to administer to himself.

So we receive, we don't grasp. That's what Adam and Eve did. They took from the tree of life and fell. We receive from the tree of God's life and live. And it reminds us too that we have to re-enact this miracle, where we find no hope, despair, lackluster, where people have lost faith and their life is running out like water. We have to grace situations that we may transform their water into wine, the joy of God and His overflowing grace. This is the servant's task.

Draw some of the water, take it to the steward and the water was transformed to wine. We administer grace through our daily lives.