

III EPIPHANY 2020

SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

FATHER CRAIG LOONEY

ROMANS 12.16 St. JOHN 2.1



A wedding banquet is a big event. It takes a lot of planning...the venue has to be just right...there has to be enough food and drink for everyone. Now...just imagine the host discovers the wine has run out. What is he to do?

The Wedding at Cana is important for a number of reasons. Cana is in Galilee...Gentile territory. Jesus performed the "first of his signs"...his first public miracle...changing a large quantity of water into wine...a sign of his divinity. Jesus shows he has power of nature.

Jesus went to the wedding banquet with his mother and disciples. In the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, we are reminded the union between a man and woman, was instituted by God, and it signifies the mystical union between Christ and this Church.

The wedding banquet is profoundly Incarnational. By his presence at the wedding banquet, Jesus glorifies marriage and shows that he thinks wedding banquets are a great idea...he approves of them.

Back to our poor host who has just discovered he is out of wine. When Mary notices the waiters are upset because they don't have any wine to serve, she asks Jesus to do something. Jesus tells his mother she must not tell him what to do. He is not being rude...he is using a common way of speaking. Mary doesn't back down and simply tells the waiters to do what Jesus said.

Jesus told the waiters to fill 30-gallon pots that had been used by the people to wash up before dinner with fresh water. He then told them to take a cup to the dinner host, who said it was the best wine he had ever tasted. Jesus had just performed his first miracle, and gave the wedding guests better wine than they had started with.

Jesus gives us something better than what we started with...the gift of him self. The Gospel shows us Jesus has control over the natural order of things...something only God has control over! The Gospel concludes that his

disciples believed on him, perhaps because they had just seen him perform a miracle and knew it was more than some magic trick, or perhaps because they sensed they needed to follow Jesus and come to know him better.

When we follow Jesus it means we want to try to act in the same way he would. In the Epistle lesson last week, Saint Paul asked us to behave in ways that gave glory to God and were in the best interests of others. What he was asking us to do is put into practice the Great Commandment: Love God above everything else; love others as we want to be loved.

This week Paul continues his lesson about applying LOVE in our lives.

- Don't be proud; accept humble duties
- If someone has done you wrong, don't repay him with a wrong
- Try to live in peace to the best of your ability
- Don't take revenge; God's justice will prevail
- Give food and drink to your enemy; he will burn with shame
- Conquer evil with good

Saint Paul asks us to show the same kind of humility Jesus showed. Don't hate people who have hurt you. Yes, that can sometimes be a hard thing to do. But Jesus never lashed out at those who hurt him. Think how hard that must have been for him.

The host at the Wedding in Cana must have sighed with relief when he realized Jesus had solved his problem of shortage of wine...and the wedding banquet could continue.

But there is more to the story than Jesus making certain there was more than enough wine to go around. Mary believes it's time for Jesus to begin his mission in earnest...and he knows what she is thinking. He does, in fact, listen to his mother...it was time to show himself to the world. It's a classic example of "Mother knows best."

And Jesus wants us to believe in him and follow him too.

