

SECOND SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME – Year C

This Sunday Gospel shares with us the miracle that Jesus at the Wedding in Cana. As I reflect on it, I'm reminded of this cute story I'd like to share with you.

A family crossing the US-Mexico border for the first time was asked by the customs agent. "What is the purpose of your visit?"

"We're going to a wedding," the mother replied.

"Are you carrying any weapons? Any knives or guns?" the agent asked.

"No," the woman replied, stunned. "It's not that kind of wedding!"

Anyway, last Sunday we celebrated the Baptism of our Lord to mark the beginning of His public ministry. After Jesus humbly let John baptize Him, God the Father & God the Holy Spirit approved it & acknowledged Him as God the Son. John certainly endorsed Jesus to be the long-awaited Messiah for the people of God & pointed Him out for his disciples. In fact, out of Jesus' first four disciples (Peter, Andrew, James, & John), three of them were John's disciples. After His first recruitment of disciples, Jesus was invited to a wedding in Cana with them & His mother. This Sunday's Gospel shares with us what happened there at the wedding.

The wedding ceremony evidently all went well. Nothing unusual happened then until the reception. Half way through it, they ran out of wine. Either they invited too many guests or those showing up belong to AA (Alcoholic Anonymous). I think they should have planned cash-bar only & would not have that wine-shortage problem. Mary the mother of our Lord found out about this problem & ran to her son for the rescue. She could have just left the wedding party to deal with that problem, but she loved to help as it was her nature. She also knew where to ask for help & came directly to her son. That's why we Catholics often come to Mary to & ask her to intercede for us in times of need. This is also a proof that she knew who her son was & what he could do. Because of her trust & confidence in Jesus, Mary gave this instruction to the helpers, "Do whatever He tells you."

This is one of the big miracles that Jesus did at the beginning of His ministry. There're a few spiritual lessons that this miracle can teach us. First of all, it's important for us to invite Jesus & the Holy Family to be a part of our lives. The wedding couple could have invited anyone they wanted especially the rich & the powerful. But, they opted to invite Jesus, Mary His mother, & His disciples. At first, they seemed to be not beneficial to the wedding couple. But, as you can see, they would become a wonderful source of help for the couple when the wine ran out. Without their help, the couple would face an embarrassing situation. This miracle tells us that it's always beneficial to be around Jesus. For He'll help us & bring a solution to our problem. He'll reach out to give us a helping hand in times of need as we see in this miracle.

Another important spiritual lesson that this miracle reminds us about is to come to Mary & ask her to intercede for our needs. Someone in the wedding party realized that the wine was about to run out & came to Mary to tell her about it. She could have told that person to tell someone else about that problem. But, because of her caring & compassionate nature, she decided to get involved & help out the wedding party. She helped set a great example of good stewardship & generosity for us. That is why many Christians look up to her as their role model & ask her to intercede for them in times of need. For she knew how to intercede & whom she would ask for help.

We live in a world that is full of greed, selfishness, & lack of care & compassion for others & common good. That attitude comes from the Western belief that individualism is the best & ultimate value. Our society believes that every American should be proud of that value & hold it to be sacred as the Ten Commandments. Sadly, some Christians buy into that belief & replace our Christian values with it. Our Christian values might respect individualism, but they do not consider it to be the bedrock foundation of our Christian belief. Instead, Christianity puts community, sharing, caring, compassion, generosity, & sacrifice for God & others as its top values. If you don't believe me, open the Bible & you'll see those values shine brightly in the Old Testament & New Testament. In fact, both Mary & Jesus remind us about those sacred values as they reached out to help the wedding couple with their problem of wine shortage. If they put individualism above the Christian values that I shared with you above, they would never reach out to help anyone. The reason I point that out for us is because some Christians have made that mistake & replaced our Christian values with American/Western cultural values. By doing that, they have undermined our Christian values & neglected to promote those in their daily lives.

My dear brothers and sisters, I don't know about you, but I strongly believe in our Christian values & would not compromise them with other cultural values. Without our Christian values, we would never see today's amazing miracle. I hope you will join me in living out our Christian values every day & promoting them to the world. That way we will see the miracle at wedding in Cana happen more often around us.