

**SPIRITUALITY**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

See 2 Thess 2:14

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

God has called us through the Gospel  
to possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel** John 2:1-11; L66C

**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.**

**Reflecting on the Gospel**

At Cana we meet Mary for the first time in John’s gospel, and we hear the first and last words that she speaks in this gospel. Already there is a sense of separateness between the mother and the son. They are at the same wedding, but come independently, Jesus being described as also invited with his disciples. John never refers to Jesus’s mother by her personal name, nor does he do this when speaking of “the beloved disciple.” Both the ideal woman disciple and the ideal man are described only by their relationship to Jesus. The mother of

the Lord is the discerning one who notices that the wine has run out. She stands before Jesus in the privileged role of mother and presents him with the problem. Jesus’s reply to her words have a note of rebuke as he calls her “Woman,” not the expected response to one’s own mother.

The mother is loved, but she is also an outsider—outside of Jesus’s free, unique relationship to God, his Father (John 7:4; 8:19; 12:27). This pain will thrust through her most deeply when she is again named as “woman” on Golgotha and is th beloved and last gift from whom Jesus dispossesses himself before he hands over his breath to his Father. Then will be the “hour” that Jesus tells his mother has not yet come at Cana.



His mother is persevering, even in the pain of Jesus’s response that amounts to telling her to keep out of it! How readily do we persevere in our discipleship when faced with what seems to be a rebuke to our faith? The mother’s faith in the words of the Word goes beyond understanding. Not understanding, not hoping, but believing—because “hope that sees for itself is not hope” (Rom 8:24)—the mother speaks to the stewards, “Do whatever he tells you.” We never hear her speak again in John’s gospel. Even on Golgotha, there is nothing more to be spoken out of her motherhood and discipleship. These words are enough for her, enough for John’s community—and enough for us. In obedience to Jesus’s words, the servants fill to the brim the six water jars used for the Jewish purificatory rites; then they draw and take the water-become-wine to the steward. The steward, who has not heard the words of Jesus or his mother, implies that it is the bridegroom who is responsible for this best wine. The Cana bridegroom is a shadowy, silent, and inactive presence, a foil for the next time a bridegroom is mentioned in John 3:29, when John the Baptist acclaims Jesus to be the Bridegroom of his people, and himself as the best man who, according to cultural practice, presents the Bridegroom to the bride Israel and then withdraws.

The purificatory jars at Cana numbered six, a symbolic number of incompleteness. At Jesus’s “hour,” there will be a seventh jar, when from the clay of his passion-fired humanity there will flow the wine of his blood, not only for purification but for exultant transformation.

The wine-become-blood redeems and purifies his bride, the church, sanctifying and deifying her. It allows her to participate in the Lord's own death and transformation, and nourishes her with the life of the resurrection. Accordingly, the wine of "the wedding of the Lamb" is the mystical image for the entire paschal feast of the Lord, the feast of the new and eternal covenant-making in the loving blood of the Lamb. It is this mystery of word and wine, this paschal celebration, which we celebrate at every Sunday Eucharist. We are now the wedding guests waiting to be filled with the sacramental wine.

**Focusing the Gospel**

**Key words and phrases:** "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.'"

**To the point:** Let all the mamas rejoice! This week we see that even Jesus fulfills the fourth commandment to honor his mother. One of the many questions we can ask this week is, why would Mary make such a big deal about wine? In order to understand this, we have to look at the context. Mary and Jesus are at a wedding, which is a celebration for the entire community. Mary notices they have run out of wine. Could the bride and groom not afford more? Did they make a miscalculation when purchasing? Whatever the situation, Mary anticipates their embarrassment, realizes this community celebration will be impacted, and makes a very big ask of her son.

**Connecting the Gospel**

**to the first reading:** In the first reading, Isaiah sings a litany of praise to the nation of Israel, foretelling its future glory, fulfilled in the person of Jesus. God makes Israel's land "his spouse," signifying a relationship come to fruition. The church ultimately becomes Christ's bride, an image that describes the depth and dependence of our relationship to Jesus Christ. It is fitting, then, to pair this vivid imagery with Jesus's first miracle, his public debut, which took place at a wedding.

**to experience:** A marriage is one of the strongest bonds humans have. We are born to parents and have no choice in siblings, but a marriage is a choice, one that is made between two separate hearts, to join together before the Lord and create a domestic church. If you are married, imagine reading the first reading to your spouse as a love poem. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he speaks of the many gifts given by the Spirit. How do your gifts, and the gifts of your spouse, balance each other?

**Connecting the Responsorial Psalm**

**to the readings:** This week's psalm doesn't speak to marriage directly, but the joy with which the psalmist praises the Lord can easily be applied to a spouse. The church is the bride of Christ, and we are called to participate in that relationship.

**to psalmist preparation:** Are you a fan of a certain team? Do you know someone who is a radical supporter of a professional or collegiate sports team? That's the kind of fervor the psalmist is sharing with us this week. This is a rallying cry, a litany of support for our Lord.

**PROMPTS FOR FAITH-SHARING**

What do you think your gifts of the Holy Spirit are?

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Within your parish planning committee, what gifts of the Holy Spirit do you see colleagues bringing?

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Think of your favorite team sport and how you support your team. What would it feel like to apply the same "fan" activities you do in sports to your faith? Do you wear team colors? Do you make space in your week to watch games with other fans?

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If you were at the wedding at Cana, how do you think you'd respond if you watched the interaction between Mary and her son?

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