

Sermon: 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Text: John 2:1-11 – The wedding in Cana

Theme: The marriage in the sight of God

Goal: Jesus blesses our marriage with His presence and He is always with us in our needs.

Dear Friends,

Introduction: Jesus was an ordinary man. He didn't shut Himself away in a monastery to please God. He lived His daily life normally as any other person used to live at that time. Till He began His ministry after His Baptism, nobody realized that He was the Son of God. He had worked as a carpenter with His father Joseph in Nazareth. And He had lived with His mother in her house till He turned 30 years old. He was invited to a wedding and He took part in the feast with His mother and His disciples and all other guests, eating and drinking what was offered there. But something happened at that wedding and He couldn't hide Himself anymore. The time had come for Jesus to reveal the real reason for what He had come. The changing of water to wine was not just one among other miracles that He performed; but it was a sign, the very first one, a miraculous sign that God was among His people to help them and to save them, so that people should believe in Him and follow Him to get the true life.

I – The marriage pleases God

The fact that Jesus accepted the invitation to go to the wedding shows us that God is pleased when a man and a woman come together in matrimony. Matrimony is not just a matter of the church, but it fits together with the universal rules. From the very beginning God said: “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him... That's why a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. The two of them will become one” (Gen 2:18, 24). Whatever goes beyond that order of God is sin: adultery, polygamy, homosexually and whatever more

is opposite and against the matrimony between one man and one woman. What is allowed inside the matrimony is not allowed outside it.

Even as some churches and cultures set the celibacy over matrimony, this is not right. Celibacy is an option, but it is not a higher estate than matrimony.

In short: God established matrimony to serve triple function: to provide partnership, because “it is not good for someone to be alone”; to healthy sexual relationship, as it is written: “they will become one flesh”; and to bear children, as it is said in Genesis 1:28: “God blessed them and said to them, “Have children and increase your numbers.” A couple doesn’t need to accomplish all the three goals; there are exceptions, as some couples cannot have children, and so on.

The image of a man and a woman united in Holy Matrimony is so precious to God that He chose this image to illustrate the close relationship He has with His people, the church. Several times in the Old and in the New Testament God presents Himself as the bridegroom and the church as His beloved bride. The prophet Isaiah says: “As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you” (Isaiah 62:5).

About the family, Proverbs says: “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it” (Proverbs 22:6). It is very difficult for a child to grow up without a family. The family plays a fundamental role in the right education of a child. We are talking about education both for this life and for eternal life! If a child doesn’t have a mother or a father living with him/her, he/she needs special care to compensate this lack. But the child will always have God’s love and the church is like an “extended family” to these children.

II – Jesus is with us in our marriage

The fact that Jesus changed water to wine, helping the bridegroom and the bride in an embarrassing situation, shows us that Jesus is aware of our daily needs at our home and He is always there to come to our aid.

Wedding parties at that time usually took a week long. The bridegroom's family had to provide food and drink to the guests. It was a shame if there was not enough food or wine to be served. (Wine was the common drink they had). – From the interference of Mary, we have to learn that we have to care not only for our own needs, but for the needs of others as well, bringing all requests to Jesus. When we pray before and/or after the meals, we acknowledge that what we have is God's gift and we give thanks for it. When we share what we have, we are doing God's will, not being selfish.

The presence of Jesus in our family shall give us confidence and peace at home. We have to repent and confess every time we are harsh with our partner or with our children. Love practices patience, - and this is not always easy. But Jesus is there, with us, to help us in our weaknesses.

III – Jesus reveals Himself as the Son of God

But above all lessons we can take from this first miracle performed by Jesus in the wedding at Cana is the fact that “Jesus revealed His glory and that His disciples put their faith in Him”.

Just as the word “Epiphany” (which means “manifestation”) implies, the Epiphany Season manifests the power of the deity of Jesus Christ for the good of all kinds of people. These manifestations in Scripture continue to be signs to us of Jesus’ power, just as they were to the first disciples. (Series C p. 49). From the manifestation to the wise men from the East, to the Transfiguration Sunday at the end of Epiphany Season, every Gospel will show Jesus proclaiming and showing Himself as the Messiah, the promised Son of God. Not all recognized the signs and very few really believed in Jesus, as His disciples did. But He

didn't give up showing that He came to reconcile God with humankind. All His signs are in a crescent sequence. When we read the Gospels with our eyes of faith, we thank God that He revealed His power and His love through the life of Jesus. Jesus was really the Emmanuel= God with us, working among His people to call them back to the right path; and He still is Emmanuel=God with us, being every moment with us and calling us through repentance and faith back to a good relationship with the Father.

Conclusion: It is said that *the families are the base of the society*. A society with broken families or without families will collapse. The same can be said about the church, with one advantage: The church is like a refuge port for many families in crises and even for broken families, because God wants to restore them, giving them a new chance and a new life. Forgiven and restored by God, families come together as one and big Christian family, to worship and serve God, and to serve each other and our neighbor. What one family cannot afford alone, we all together can afford by common efforts and God's blessings.

Don't miss the presence of Jesus in your home and in your life. He wants to sit and eat and drink with you. He wants to rejoice with you. He wants to share your concerns and needs. And above all, He wants to reveal His love for you as God's Son and your personal Savior. Bring your requests to Him, acknowledge His signs in your life, and allow Him to guide your life and your family. He will bless you according to the words of Psalm 128: "Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. May the LORD bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel."

