

Gospel: John 2:1-11 C 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

1On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2**Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. **3**When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." **4**And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." **5**His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." **6**Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. **7**Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. **8**He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. **9**When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom **10**and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." **11**Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Identity of Jesus and his ministry is introduced with important symbols: a joyous wedding, six Jewish ritual pots, thirsty wedding guests, and an abundance of wine.

Cana – 10 miles north of Nazareth; blissful setting of great joy and abundance;

Chap 2-4 with the village of Cana as bookends,

- 1) Jesus turns water into wine,
- 2) explains that his body is the new temple (2:13-25),
- 3) challenges Nicodemus to be born from above (3:1-21),
- 4) offers living water to an unnamed woman at a well (4:1-45),
- 5) returns to Cana to give life to the son of a royal official (4:46-54).

Jesus clearly fulfills the promise of the Gospel narrative: "these (things) are written as that... you may have life" (20:31)

Symbols such as water, temple, wind, birth, and old wells are given new meaning as Jesus proclaims his life-giving powers.

V 1 "On the third day" symbolic representation of the resurrection – third-day kind of happening

Wine supply is low; Mary feels responsible; turns to Jesus for help; "My hour has not yet come."

He is reluctant to reveal a part of himself to the wedding guests, but this is his mother, and he obeys

6 pots – used for ritual cleansing; symbols of the emptiness of the traditional religion.

Jesus fills them with eschatological wine, a rich symbol in the biblical tradition inferring prosperity, abundance, good times; the wine will overflow

Metaphor for Jesus' ministry as he brings vitality to the ancient religion.

Wine is first of sign – signs reveal the person of Jesus; result is that some who see the sign will understand it and some will reject it.

John 2:11 clearly states the purpose in summary fashion, "Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

Reflection and discussion:

"his disciples believed in him." – doesn't say everyone present believed. Age-old mystery about why some believe, while others do not. What does it take?

Chief steward doesn't know the source of this good wine. Many of those around us, and sometimes we ourselves, fail to recognize the source of so much that we have and enjoy.

Favorite wedding memories?