

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wedding at Cana
January 20, 2019
Fr. Max Oliva, S.J.

I. When I saw the Gospel reading for today, I was very pleased because it is one of my favorite New Testament stories: a wedding; the wedding party and their friends; the joy amongst all there; good food, wine; Jesus and his mother there.

And then the miracle! It came as the result of Mary's sensitivity to the bride and groom and their families. "They have run out of wine," she says to her son," and her persistence when he is hesitant, "Do whatever he tells you to do" she tells the servers.

Monika Hellwig, a professor of Theology, shares this reflection on the story:

The Cana story tells us that we may think of our faith as a family affair, turning to Mary's mediation, confident that Jesus cares about ordinary people and their ordinary concerns.

On a lighter note, here are some reflections on marriage from children:

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHO TO MARRY?

"You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming." ---Alan, age 10

WHAT IS THE RIGHT AGE TO GET MARRIED?

"Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person forever by then." ---Camille, age 10

HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MARRIED?

"You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids." ---Derrick, age 8

HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK?

"Tell your wife that she looks pretty even if she looks like a dump truck." ---Ricky, age 10

II. The Cana Story, it turns out, also has many allusions. Marriage appears frequently in the Bible as an expression of the God-human relationship. In the First Reading, from the book of the prophet, Isaiah, we hear that the Israelites are once again settled in their homeland after the exile. Prospects for the future are bright. Israel has gone from being “Desolate” and “Forsaken” to being “Delight” in God’s eyes: “The Lord delights in you and makes your land his spouse.” Jerusalem, the Holy City, is taken by God as bride. God has a deep affection and commitment to her people. The dignity of marriage is seen in these words, “As a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.”

Father Michael Simone, who teaches scripture at Boston College adds some more dimensions to the Cana story.

"Some commentators believe John (it is in his gospel that the wedding story appears) is presenting Jesus and Mary as the new Adam and Eve, signifying a new creation. Others see in this miracle a reference to Exodus, in which Moses’ first sign was to turn the waters of Egypt into blood. Still others find in this account a foreshadowing of the heavenly feast in which all Christ’s disciples will someday join.”

Clearly, the miracle at Cana is also about discipleship: being sensitive to the needs of others as Mary was and the love that Jesus showed the recently married couple by solving the wine crisis. Lessons for us, too. Sharing the gifts we have received, out of love, with others in the community.

III. Many married couples have written on the sanctity of marriage. They emphasize certain important behaviors for a good marriage:

Communication, and often
Being faithful (as God is to us)
Being kind
Accepting the other as he or she is Forgiving and forgetting
Appreciating each other
Finding Christ in one another and telling each other how

The couple in Cana will have many opportunities to learn and practice these behaviors in their married life.

And so, let us pray for all married couples and for those preparing for the Sacrament. May they find God at the center of their life together.

AMEN

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