

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!

Christmas season officially came to a close last Sunday. Today, our liturgy moves into a different ordered cycle called ‘Ordinary Time, Year C.’ This longer liturgical season is another opportunity for the faithful to increase daily in hope and growth in Christ – a time when the ongoing unfolding of Christ’s ministry is celebrated and honored in its fullness. New liturgical colors are the bright greens symbolic of new life and growth. Today we observe our Lord’s first public ministry of the Wedding Feast at Cana.

In our First Reading, Isaiah uses the metaphor of a spousal love to describe God’s fidelity to his people, which he compares to a husband’s fidelity to his wife. It represents the patience of a loving God still trying to get the people to respond to His grace. As I noted last Sunday, through Baptism, each of us have been betrothed to Christ as a bride to his groom. In his Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul reminds us that *every* Christian, no matter how great or obscure, is important in God’s Kingdom. He writes this to a fledgling Christian community who have no end of questions and concerns about how a Christian should act.

In contemplating today’s Wedding at Cana, let me stress what happened when the wine “ran short.” Jesus’ Mother, ever selfless and noticing every little detail, remarked about this to her son. Initially, Jesus appeared reluctant to do anything, but since the request came from his beloved Mother, he subsequently informed the servants to simply fill six large stone jars with water. When they had completed this, they carried this water-turned into new exquisitely rich wine, to the headwaiter. In ancient times, weddings would go on for many days, and at this moment, the headwaiter was astonished that such first-rate wine had been reserved for eleventh-hour, thus St. John reveals how Jesus closes out those Jewish rites and manifests Himself as fulfillment of the Prophets. Our Lord’s evident mercy reveals Him, not as son of Mary, but as son of God. Another encounter with wine comes at that ‘hour’ when He will drink the Cup of Suffering. Again, Mary’s merciful interaction will be there for him giving Him strength at His Crucifixion.

Thus, the intercessory role of Mary at this wedding saved so many situations, especially for the hosts. Should this not then be a good reason for spouses to frame their marital foundation around the presence of Jesus and Mary in their homes? When our idealistic expectations of marriage, shared love, and usual patience ‘run short,’ spouses may intreat Jesus and Mary, beseeching them to fortify their marriage! What a dramatically unique way to resolve marital difficulties in this secular culture! They will refresh and revive family life, removing its discontent.

“Holy Mother of God, pray for us, just as at Cana you prayed for the bride and the bridegroom! Guide us towards Jesus - ever anew! Amen!” **Benedict XVI, 2006.**

Happy Sunday!