

Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

Year C

Isaiah 62: 1-5

Psalm 96: 1-3, 7-10

1 Cor 12: 4-11

John 2: 1-12

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Over the years, when I have sat down with engaged couples to assist them in preparing their wedding Mass or ceremony, I would always sweat a bit when it came to selecting the gospel. I would say to myself while smiling at the couple: “Please don’t pick the wedding feast at Cana as your gospel reading for your wedding. I hope they pick a nice passage with Jesus talking about love or calling his disciples ‘friends’.” I always thought that the story of the wedding feast at Cana was not a “good” gospel to preach on. What could I say about the passage – simply that Jesus liked weddings and that he provided some good wine for the celebration? How can I relate this gospel to the experience of this couple on the cusp of entering into marriage? It would certainly be easier to talk about the love relationship and friendship that Jesus calls the couple to embrace.

When I read the gospel this weekend and looked over a few commentaries, I was given a very interesting insight about the story of the wedding feast at Cana. One scripture commentator, Alice Camille, made a very interesting observation that helped me to see the story of the wedding feast at Cana with a new perspective. The action of Jesus in this story is the first of Jesus’ signs. In a real way, it was on the occasion of a wedding feast that Jesus began his public ministry. It was the “jumping off” point for Jesus into a public life of teaching, preaching and healing to bring alive the Kingdom of God. What an interesting perspective! What a new insight for me as I read this story of the wedding feast again! What implications it has for couples as they prepare to enter into marriage!

Couples who stand ready before the altar of God to pledge their lives to each other experience their own jumping off point. It is on the day of their wedding that they are launched into a life of love for each other and for the family they will one day create. Just as Jesus was launched into his ministry, so, too, couples entering into the sacrament of marriage are launched into their vocation of life-long love, mutual respect and fidelity.

This same jumping off point is true for all followers of Jesus. On the day of our baptism, we began our journey of faith. As we grow and mature, we come to know more fully what God has planned for us and we are nudged by God’s love and mercy to embrace this plan. We are launched out into the world to do our part in making alive and present the good news that Jesus offers to humanity. And we go out into this world assured by the promise of Jesus’ support and presence through thick and through thin. Jesus trusted in his Father that his mission and his ministry would not be in vain. Do we have that same trust in our Father in heaven as we jump out into the world once again nourished by the celebration of this Eucharist?

The next time I sit down with a couple to help plan their wedding ceremony, when it comes time to select the gospel, I can now say with great confidence: “How about the story of Jesus at the wedding feast at Cana?”