

2nd Sunday (C)

20th January 2019

‘They have no wine’

Is 62: *as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you*

Ps 95: ... *His wonders among all the peoples*

1Cor 12: *a variety of gifts ...*

Jn 2: 1–11: *His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever He tells you.”*

Why is it, at the start of these weeks of Ordinary Time in Year ‘C’ — the year of Luke — that we get this passage from St John’s Gospel instead? It’s a famous passage, of course, the Wedding Feast at Cana. And it fits into the timeline ... Last Sunday we had the Baptism of Jesus, and this is His first miracle. In fact, His Mother Mary is mentioned ahead of Him, so presumably he hasn’t yet come into His own ... But in this moment He does. He lets His glory be seen — at least, by a few — and His disciples believe in Him. It follows on from the feasts that we celebrated recently in latter part of the Christmas season: the Epiphany (to the Magi), and then the Baptism of Jesus, both of which can be considered ‘epiphanies’ — public manifestations of Jesus’s divinity. Well, this is the third of those epiphanies, as He performs His first miracle, and His divinity is once again seen, very clearly, in the abundance of top-quality wine. The miracle is without doubt, and the

apostles present believe in Him.

There are so many details in this episode, but the key is surely that Our Lady models to the Lord’s first apostles the need to pray, to turn to Jesus, to implore His help. I’d never really thought about it before, but I wonder who hears those words from Our Lady’s lips, “They have no wine”? I guess that I’d always thought of it just as a comment to Jesus. She knows full well the divine origin of Jesus; Jesus Himself knows full well that He will perform the miracle in this simple setting of a Galilee village wedding. But the apostles do not yet know exactly who Jesus is. So, in fact, it’s surely likely that Our Lady is really including the apostles in this moment. She’s showing them that in all things they are to turn to Him. “Do whatever He tells you,” she says to the servants who go off to fill the great vats of water. But she’s also saying to the apostles the same thing, that they can rely on Him absolutely, in everything; that they can trust Him in all things. They are new on the scene, they’ve just been called from their previous occupations by Jesus, whilst Mary has known Jesus to be the Son of God

for 30yrs or more. Here at Cana she is already becoming in some way the Mother of the apostles, teaching them how to relate to Jesus. This is a great reminder of Our Blessed Lady's special place in the Christian's life. We can rely on her to model our relationship with Christ, and to encourage us in it.

In every single moment, and in every single situation, however simple, daily, domestic, we can turn to Christ. When we're out of strength, out of patience, out of ideas ... We can turn to Him. Our Lady encourages us, and she notices too: "They have no wine." When we are tired and weak, and when we are overwrought by the cares of life, she notices too, and she urges us to turn to Christ with her prayer, "They have no wine." This is the heart of our devotion to the Blessed Mother, that she accompanies us in our prayer, she takes it in hand and she promotes it. In fact, she often makes that prayer ahead even of our own realising the desperate need.

Let's notice, like the apostles, the Lord's great work, His power to change the ordinary into the extraordinary, the

mundane into the glorious. Let's follow the example of her who knows better than any of us the power of Jesus to bring peace and goodness, joy and abundant blessings into our lives. Let's allow Our Lady to be our Mother, and to lead us humbly to follow Jesus and to learn from Him. Let's make sure that we follow her example of prayer — simple, direct, heartfelt, trusting prayer. What is it that we need? ... today ... that's good for us, that's needed by another, ... by the world? Let's ask for it, and await the Lord's response. He will reply, in His own way, and in His own time, but He will never give anything that is bad or wrong for us, ... though we must always remember that it is our immortal souls that He longs for, our holiness and salvation.

"The best is yet to come," it might be said, of the spiritual life, just as the best wine at the wedding was at the end, when Jesus intervened. Let's pray for that closeness to Jesus that we need, so that at the end — when our earthly years are over — we can taste of the heavenly banquet, the superabundant, overflowing, wine of divine joy. Our Lady, too, wants us to be there, where she already is.