

REFLECTION for the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

After the feasts of Christmas and the Baptism of the Lord, we enter Ordinary Time. This liturgical season does not refer to special events in the life of Christ, but rather presents us with Jesus' journey through the lands of Palestine with his miracles and teachings.

Specifically, on this second Sunday in Ordinary Time, we have St. John the Evangelist's account of Jesus' first "Sign": the transformation of water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana. This 'miracle' takes place in the context of a wedding feast. In Sacred Scripture, marriage has often served as a model for God's relationship with his people. The first reading we have just heard, taken from the Book of the Prophecies of Isaiah, shows us this well:

'For Sion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch....

You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.

For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.'

The author speaks of God's relations with his people as spousal relations. Jerusalem, which represents the People of God, is seen as the Lord's wife. That is why St. John begins his account of the public life of Jesus Christ with a wedding feast. St Paul will also speak of Christ's relationship with his Church using the image of marriage, as can be seen in his Letter to the Ephesians.

To this marriage feast which took place in Cana of Galilee, a town near Nazareth, Mary was invited and took Jesus and his disciples with her. Mary is the woman; the mother of the new children of God. The new People of God, the Church, which will be born of Christ on the cross has Mary as the new Eve. She is the faithful woman through whom the One who will crush the head of the serpent, the head of the deceitful dragon spoken of in the Book of Revelation, will be born.

That is why in this episode of the wedding at Cana she is present and takes an active part in the miracle that takes place, the transformation of water into wine. She will also be at the cross, and there she will also be the woman whom John will welcome into his home. Mary thus becomes the Mother of the new People of God: the Church.

The Gospel also tells us that the wine resulting from the water that Jesus turned into wine was new, and better than the wine already served. Things are always better with Jesus: Jesus' wine is always better, life with Christ always has meaning, and although it has the cross on its horizon, life with Christ is always resurrected and full.

The second reading tells us that the Kingdom of God must be built by us day by day in communion with one another; each with their own gifts, their own charisms, and all united in the same spirit and mission of sowing the Good News of the Kingdom of God. Each of us is responsible for building up his Church, building paths of fraternity, communion, and peace.

Let us pray to the Lord that we may always be able to drink of his wine; the wine of his love, his grace, and his life, and let us all commit ourselves to realising his Kingdom amongst us.

Amen