January 20, 2019
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – “Jesus’ Glory Revealed Through the Cana Wedding Feast”
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Reading 1 Isaiah 62:1-5
For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her vindication shines forth like the dawn and her victory like a burning torch.

Nations shall behold your vindication, and all the kings your glory; you shall be called by a new name pronounced by the mouth of the LORD. You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the LORD, a royal diadem held by your God. No more shall people call you “Forsaken, “ or your land “Desolate, “ but you shall be called “My Delight, “ and your land “Espoused.” For the LORD delights in you and makes your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.

Reading 2 1 Cor 12:4-11
Brothers and sisters: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another, the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another, mighty deeds; to another, prophecy; to another, discernment of spirits; to another, varieties of tongues; to another, interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

Gospel John 2:1-11
There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told the them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from — although the servers who had drawn the water knew —, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.” Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

HOMILY
A state trooper stops a car that was speeding and being driven rather erratically. As the trooper comes over to the car window, he notices Father Gabriel and the smell of alcohol on his breath. The trooper says, “Father, have you been drinking.” “Just water,” says the priest. The trooper says, “Then, why do I smell wine?” Father Gabriel looks at the empty wine bottle sitting on the floor and says, “Good Lord, He’s done it again! He’s changed the water into wine!”
When I was growing up, my parents owned a catering business and, being 5’11” at the ripe old age of 13, I helped them out at various events, including weddings, for almost 10 years. Of the many dozens of weddings that I helped serve at, I can remember running out of food a few times – it was so good, people often came back for 2nds and 3rds – I can remember the celebration running out of time – when everybody was having a great time and wanted to keep going, but the band had finished, so it was over – but I can never remember the hosts running out of something to drink.

But that’s what happened in the Gospel story from John that we just heard about. Many of us have probably heard this passage so often that we know the details, or what we think are the details. Let’s look at it again: Jesus and His mother were at a wedding. But, His disciples were also there – we may have missed that important part in the past. The wedding party ran out of wine, so Mary coaxed Jesus into doing something about it. He had the servants fill very large jugs with water and then bring some to the headwaiter. After tasting it, the headwaiter exclaimed that this newly found wine was even better than what was first being served! End of story … Jesus’ first miracle, with more to follow.

Aha! But, that’s the story on the surface … John’s Gospel passages often give us so much more than what’s on the surface. Look again at that last line, “Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.” During these last several weeks, we have seen Jesus being revealed in steps to the people around Him:

- Certainly at His birth, which we celebrated almost 4 weeks ago, Jesus came into the world, and was especially revealed to, and celebrated by, the shepherds and others around the Jewish countryside, many of whom had little wealth.

- A week later, we celebrated the Epiphany, when Jesus was revealed to foreigners, Gentiles, who traveled from a great distance and welcomed Him with precious and expensive gifts, gifts that Joseph might have had to sell to pay for their flight to Egypt for a few years.

- Last weekend, we heard that Jesus’ divinity was revealed by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove at His baptism, with the words from above, “This is my beloved Son – listen to Him.”

- And now, at Cana, Jesus’ glory is revealed to all around Him, and especially His disciples, who “began to believe in Him.” This glory may not have been fully understood by them at the time, but certainly, they began to believe that He was more than a carpenter, that He was more than a rabbi … maybe He was a prophet, maybe even the long-awaited Messiah.

But the Wedding Feast at Cana revealed several other features of Jesus, pertaining both to His humanity and His divinity. Of course, we celebrate life events today, but the Jewish people went all out to celebrate them in the time of Jesus. Wedding banquets could last for a week, and Jesus is shown to enjoy this wedding with those around Him. … Then, He responded to His mother’s request to help solve the impending crisis, to help avoid embarrassment on the part of the newly married. … He not only solved the issue, but did so in magnificent glory – picture the 6 jars, each containing about 25 gallons of fine wine. For you math majors or wine connoisseurs, that’s about 750 bottles of Cabernet or 3000 glasses of Riesling – certainly much more than needed to last the remainder of the celebration.

How, and where, is Jesus revealed to us, as His disciples today, in our lives? Through whom is Jesus revealed to us in our lives? And, what do we do with that revelation? To know Jesus is to know God, and what God wants us to be like, how God wants us to live, how to celebrate life, how to treat others with love, compassion and respect, how to serve others, how to be true disciples of Christ … and then, how to help others know about God, so that they also can become disciples, and do likewise.
Some years ago, I mentioned the acronym **PEAS** to help remember, to help summarize, our role as disciples. Think of the word **PEAS**, and think of what the letters might stand for, the next time you eat or see them, or see a youngster struggle with them on his or her plate:

**P: for prayer.** whether private or communal, scripted or made-up on-the-spot, talk with Jesus. He knows your daily struggles, your needs. … For example, I needed help with the 12 inches of new snow on my driveway this morning, to get to 11:15 Mass on time. … Jesus is waiting for you to talk to Him about your needs. Ask for help, for yourself, for others, and ask often. He will reveal His love for you. Remember, God answers prayers, **abundantly**, like at Cana. And pray for grace, **abundant** grace, to overcome temptations, to do the right thing. Your prayers will be heard, and answered, according to God’s Will. … God answered my prayer – a neighbor down the street came over with his snow-blower, just in time. … Pray that you may know God’s Will, and that you may accept it. Pray for Mary to intercede for you. Jesus listens to His Mother – He did at Cana, He will again for you.

**E: for education.** There are so many opportunities for us, for each and every one of us, to get to know Jesus even more than we do, for Jesus to reveal Himself to us even more. Consider the Bible and the Catechism, Parish Bible studies, the readings at Mass and the homilies – but maybe not the jokes – Lighthouse Catholic CD’s from the Narthex, movies and other titles from the parish FORMED website, lives of the saints, and other good, spiritually-sound materials.

**A: for action.** And there are numerous opportunities for us to act as disciples of Christ, to help reveal the love of Christ by our actions. Opportunities for us to celebrate life, and to respect life, all human life, from conception to natural death. Opportunities to celebrate marriage and the resolution of difficulties that may happen in married life. Opportunities to shy away from the culture of death, the culture of darkness, the culture of sin – all sin, including the deadly sins. Opportunities at the voting booth, at your local school, at the Planned Parenthood facility, in your investments. Opportunities to encourage religious freedom, from being forced to participate in acts against your well-formed conscience. … Father Juan just returned with Youth Group members from marching for life in the nation’s capitol – ask some of the youngsters how it went, and why they did it – who knows, maybe you might decide to join them next year. … Find out more about Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr, whose holiday we celebrate on Monday – read his Letter from Birmingham Jail, freely available as a download, where he chastised fellow Christians, and especially clergy, who encouraged him to wait for equal rights because they will eventually happen. King thought 340 years was long enough.

**S: for service.** where we can continue to reveal the love of God by helping others. Jesus came to serve, and not be served. Corporal and Spiritual works of mercy are needed more than ever in our families, our neighborhoods, our nation, our world.

This weekend, we celebrate the wedding feast at Cana and how Christ was revealed to His disciples then and revealed to us today in His glory – His miracle of abundant response to a need, His love and concern for others, His attentiveness to His mother, His celebration of acquaintances sharing their love and getting married. As you bundle up this evening with the blizzard-like conditions howling outside, I encourage you to think about this year, and adding another resolution to your list: continue looking as to how God is revealed in your daily life, how you can live out that revelation of love, and how you can help others to do likewise. And … don’t forget that side dish of **PEAS**!