

Entrance into Lent: Miracle at the wedding in Cana

Readings: Is 55:1-13; Rom 14:14-23 and Jn 2:1-11

The changing of water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana is the first public miracle noted in John's Gospel. According to the account as we have it, Jesus was possibly reluctant even to perform this miracle. Did Mary know he could do it? Why did she force his hand? Did either of them realize how dire the ultimate results of Jesus "GOING PUBLIC" would be?

Isaiah makes it clear that God desires a covenanted relationship with us -a relationship akin to that which exists between a loving husband and wife. Thus, the gospel blesses this marital covenant: "JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES" are among the invited guests at this wedding in Cana, and his transformation of the water directly heightens the celebratory mood of the assembled community.

Today's gospel tells us that this "FIRST OF HIS SIGNS ... REVEALED HIS GLORY; AND HIS DISCIPLES BELIEVED IN HIM." Didn't his disciples "BELIEVE IN HIM" before they came to Cana? Why else would they have been disciples? Or do the believers now include all those present at the wedding feast?

What is the larger mystery here? Can it be that everything begins with faith and hope and love -with relationship?

The "WEDDING IN CANA OF GALILEE" points us to the mystery of covenant and community and celebration, of gifts and service and Eucharist, of birth and death and life everlasting.

Lent, an Intense Period

Lent is an "intense" time. But time is cadenced by human life, and if we want to grasp its "intense" aspect, we must not refer to what is negative and gloomy, but rather to the initial certainty that still and always, through struggles and toil, constitutes the profound meaning of life and accompanies it: Jesus and his Gospel. The tension that comes from this source makes Lent a moment of joy, blessing and salvation. The way is "intense" because it affirms the image of a Church that strives to acquire a countenance of beauty and glory:

- 1- it is "intense" because it lets the newness emerge of God's children, who discover that they are such and understand that theirs is not just a small, everyday destiny made up of pettiness and illusions;
- 2- it is "intense" because it urges us to "understand what is in one's heart" (as Moses said to his people about the experience of the Exodus), and thus to discover the value and immense possibilities hidden within us, and to demand that they be developed and lived intensely;
- 3- it is "intense" because it commits to a lifestyle that makes effort, toil, asceticism, and then conversion inevitable as an experience of grace and salvation.

We are the ones who describe this time as "intense" when we do not reduce it to something equivalent to our usual everyday life. What must we do in order to give witness to this?

The Church proposes three paths of personal effort: fasting — alms — prayer. This is a life program that comes to us from afar. An ancient Father of the Church spoke about it with such enthusiasm that it still gives hope to those who accept his sincere, severe proposal today and corrects modernity's "reductions" of Lent: *"There are three things, three, O brothers, for which the faith is steadfast, devotion endures, and virtue remains: prayer, fasting, mercy.*

What prayer asks for is obtained through fasting and received through mercy. These three things, prayer, fasting and mercy, are one, and they get life from one another. Fasting is the soul of prayer and mercy is the life of fasting. Let no one divide them because they cannot be separated. Anyone who has only one of them or does not have all three together has nothing. Therefore, anyone who prays must fast. Anyone who fasts must have mercy. Anyone who fasts must understand well what it means for others when they do not eat. Listen to those who are hungry if you want your fasting to be pleasing to God. Have compassion if you hope to receive compassion. Whoever asks for piety must exercise it. Anyone who wants to be granted a gift must open his hands to others. It is a poor asker who denies others what he asks for himself...

O you who are fasting, know that your field will be empty if mercy is empty. Instead what you give in mercy will return to your granary abundantly. Therefore, O man, so as not to lose by wanting to keep for

yourself, distribute to others and then you will reap. Give to yourself by giving to the poor for what you bequeath to another, you will not have...

Let whoever asks and wants to be heard hear those who entreat him. Whoever wants to find God’s heart open towards him must not close his own to those who entreat him...

Therefore, for us, prayer, fasting and mercy are only one mediating force with God. May they be only one defense for us, only one prayer with three aspects”

(St. Pier Crisologo).

If we live Lent according to this program, then our lives will truly have “intense” times, and the prize at the destination is the Resurrection.

Ash Monday & Wednesday: God’s Mercy Renews

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.” (Psalm 51:1)

Our temptation in Lent is to be impressed by our sins and failings and so overwhelmed by our lack of generosity that we get stuck in a paralyzing guilt, a guilt that leads to introspection instead of directing our eyes to God. It is guilt that becomes an idol and form of pride.

But Lent is precisely the time to break down this idol and to direct our attention to our loving Lord. The question is: “Are we like Judas, who was so overcome by his sin that he could not believe in God’s mercy any longer and hanged himself? Or are we like Peter, who returned to his Lord with repentance and cried bitterly for his sins?”

“You are dust, and to dust you will return.” This ancient formula will be heard by millions of Christians all over the world this Ash Monday as the sign of the cross is made in ashes on their forehead. This symbolic act is both a solemn reminder and an invitation to renewal. Lord God, this Lent help me to do my best to keep my mind fixed on You and Your Kingdom.

Stations of the Cross & Light Dinner *(Every Friday during Lent)*

Every Friday during Lent, we celebrate the Mass at 5:30 p.m. Mass will be followed by the Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Cross. The “*Stations of the Cross*” is a devotion which consists of following the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ by recalling the fourteen prominent events that took place from the time of the trial under Pontius Pilate until His death and burial on Mount Calvary. Many Thanks to these generous families who sponsored light meatless dinners after the Stations of the Cross. If any other family wants to participate in the social hour, please ask and join the families listed below.

Date:	Volunteers Who are sponsoring the Light Meals on Fridays during Lent:
1st Friday, February 16	Meal Sponsors: Chris & Jeannette Wakim
2 nd Friday, February 23	Meal Sponsors: Susan & Ron Burns
3 rd Friday, March 1	Meal Sponsors: Dr. Nabel & Nisrine Alkhouri and Family
4 th Friday, March 8	Meal Sponsor: Liz & Jay Murad
5 th Friday, March 15	Meal Sponsors: George & Susan Saseen and the Frenn Family
6 th Friday, March 22	Meal Sponsors: ??????????
Good Friday, March 29	Meal Sponsors: The Cedar Club & Parishioners
Easter Sunday, March 31	Happy Easter

Creating Your Legacy

How can you manage your charitable giving more efficiently to benefit the charities you love and support, like our church established by our ancestors since 1906? The Parish Council opened an Endowment Fund Account designated exclusively for the church maintenance for years to come. All donations are tax deductible. Please let us keep our beautiful church well maintained and donate anytime toward this account or put the church in

writing in your last will. To donate, please call the church office at 304-233-1688. May the Blessed Mother reward you in this life and in the next.
--Monsignor Bakhos, pastor.

This Weekend: Sat.-Sun., February 10-11: Entrance to Lent: Cana Sunday

Saturday, February 10, Mass at 4:00 p.m.:

- ✠ Eva M. Coury (Anniversary) by Richard Coury
- ✠ Noel Foreman by his wife Anne
- ✠ Janis & George Thomas (Ohio) by their last will
- ✠ Special Intention

Sunday, February 11, Mass at 10:30 a.m.:

- ✠ Mary Stees by Carol Dougherty (OK)
- ✠ John Shiben by Denna O. Shiben (FL)
- ✠ Mike & Sue Linton and their parents Joe and Frances Linton by Steve Linton

Weekdays Mass Schedule

Ash Monday, February 12:

Mass at Noon and Blessing with Ash

- ✠ Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her last Will
- ✠ Sylvia Long, her husband Arthur, and her son Mark by her last will
- ✠ Mary Stees by Msgr Bakhos

Mass at 5:30 p.m. and Blessing with Ash

- ✠ Deceased of the Thomas, Splatt & Nutter Families by John & Kathy Thomas (MN)
- ✠ Janis & George Thomas (Ohio) by their last will
- ✠ Mary Stees by Michael & Kathryn Kelly

Tuesday, February 13: No Mass. Pastor Day off.

Ash Wednesday, February 14:

Mass at Noon and Blessing with Ash

- ✠ Mary Stees by Judith Myers
- ✠ Mike & Sue Linton and their parents Joe and Frances Linton by Steve Linton
- ✠ John Shiben by Denna O. Shiben (FL)

Mass at 5:30 p.m. and Blessing with Ash

- ✠ Noel Foreman by his wife Anne
- ✠ John Shiben by Denna O. Shiben (FL)

Thursday, February 15, Mass at Noon:

- ✠ John Shiben by Denna O. Shiben (FL)
- ✠ Mary Stees by Diane Coughlan

Friday, February 16: No Mass. Visitation of the sick.

Next Weekend: Sat.-Sun., Feb. 17-18: Sunday of the Leper

Saturday, February 17, Mass at 4:00 p.m.:

- ✠ Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her last Will
- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his grandchildren: Jeff, Courtney and Patrick
- ✠ Special Intention

Sunday, February 18, Mass at 10:30 a.m.:

- ✠ Special Intentions of Barb McLaughlin (Birthday) by the McLaughlin and Graney Families
- ✠ Mary Stees by Earl & Linda Duffy
- ✠ Robert Rose (Anniversary) by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt

Coming Parish Events

Sunday, April 28	Mother Day dinner after 10:00 am Mass
Mother Day Masses	2 weekends Masses for Mothers & Grandmothers (May 11-19)
Saturday, May 11	Bake Sale. More details in next bulletins.
Father Day Masses	2 weekends Masses for Fathers & Grandfathers (June 15-23)



Easter Lillies donated in Memory of:

- ✠ Gladys Howard & Louise N. & Lois H. Khourey, Sr. by Lou & Charlotte Khourey and Family
- ✠ Tom & Mary K. Ferris by their daughter Denise Ferris
- ✠ Mary Stees by Denise Ferris
- ✠ Adib & Sadie (parents), Nadim (brother), Mona (sister) by Msgr Bakhos Chidiac

Birthdays Wishes in the Coming Month:

- February 11: Charlotte Khourey
- February 14: Diane Frenn
- February 15: Nettie Seidler
- February 16: Dave Sengewalt
- February 17: Rebecca DiFabrizio
- February 18: Larry Ferrera III
- February 21: Louie Khourey, Dennis Porter
- February 24: Mary Lee Porter
- February 27: MaryAnn Carl
- March 2: Ava Murad
- March 4: Jeff Sengewalt
- March 6: Kristen McLaughlin
- March 10: Liam George

<i>Your Church Support Last Week</i>	
\$2,295.00	Sunday Collection
97.00	Candles
21.00	Coffee hour
50.00	Donation to the church
550.00	Donations to the church in Memory of Mary Stees
389.00	Utilities
\$3,402.00	Total Deposits: <i>May God reward you abundantly for supporting your spiritual home!</i> Finance Committee: Lou Khourey, Mary Stees, Linda Duffy, Susan Burns, Liz Murad

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

(Note: Please call Msgr. Bakhos if you need your name added to our Prayer List. HIPPA regulations)

Dolores Oser, Sally Sengewalt, Anthony Wakim, Frank Duymich, Earl Duffy, Fran Saseen, Rex Strawn, Sandra DeMuth, Ken Imer, Justin Frenn, Elia Frenn, Patty Fahey, Patty Olinsky, Julia Schiess (daughter of Leo Bleifus), Earl Ragase, Fred Schweizer (brother of our organist Mary Lee Porter),

Rummage Sale Items Drop off all Year Long

Please bring with you to the church all the items you wish to donate toward the Rummage Sale. Items are accepted all year long. The Cedar Club and the Women Society raise funds to cover the expensive Building Insurance of our church. Any donation is accepted and helpful. We will open the basement door for you anytime. Please call 304-233-1688

What's New?

In our Mailbox

Dear Msgr. Bakhos, We have a Saint Sharbel Retreat on Saturday March 23 at the Center and I wanted to see if you would be willing to announce it to anyone that might be interested in attending. The spots are filling up but I would love to connect with your parish. There will be a guest Speaker Fr. Daniel-Maria Klimek, Priest, Franciscan Friar and author of the book 'For the Love of Mary'.

Here is the Agenda:

Friday March 22: *Saint Sharbel Day at the Center* (Confessions available all day).

2pm-4pm Registration, Quiet reading/meditation

3pm Stations of the Cross

4pm Eucharistic Adoration

5pm Rosary

5:30pm Divine Liturgy and blessing with Relic of St. Sharbel and holy oil

7:30pm-Dinner and Discussion

Saturday March 23: Retreat Day

7:30am-8:15am: Continental Breakfast

8:15am: Chaplet of Saint Charbel

8:30am-10am: Saint Sharbel with Dr. Anne Borik

10am-10:15am: Break

10:15am-11:45am Eucharistic Miracles with Dr. Anne Borik

12Noon-1:15pm: Lunch

1:30pm-2:45pm: SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER Fr. Daniel-Maria Klimek, a Catholic Priest, Franciscan Friar and Mariologist who has taught at Franciscan University of Steubenville and St. Bonaventure University.

Author of the book "For the Love of Mary'. He will speak about diving into a deeper spirituality/intimacy with Our Lady.

2:45pm-3pm: Break

3pm: Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by Holy Rosary

4pm: Divine Liturgy and blessing with holy oil of Saint Sharbel

6pm-8pm: Dinner and Wrap up

IMPORTANT: If anyone is traveling from out of town, we have room accommodations at the Martina Spiritual Renewal Center (only 8 mi from the Center). Please email me if you are interested.

Cost: \$45 includes all meals and Saint Sharbel Chaplet and material handouts.

I will send you a flyer.

Blessings, Anne Borik cell 480-628-3929. www.saintsharbelcenter.org

Spirituality: God and evil

Did God create Evil?

At a certain college there was a professor with a reputation for being tough on Christians. At the first class, every semester, he asked if anyone was a Christian and proceeded to degrade them and to mock their statement of faith. One semester, he asked the question; and a young man raised his hand.

The professor asked, "Did God make everything young man?" He replied "Yes sir he did!" The professor responded, "IF God made everything, then he made evil." The student didn't have a response, and the professor was happy to once again prove the Christian faith to be a myth.

Then another man raised his hand and asked, "May I ask you something, sir?" "Yes, you may," responded the professor. The young man stood up and said, "Sir, is there such a thing as cold?" "Of course there is, what kind of a question is that? Haven't you ever been cold?" The young man replied, "Actually, sir, cold doesn't exist. What we consider to be cold, is really an absence of heat. Absolute zero is when there is absolutely no heat, but cold does not really exist. We have only created that term to describe how we feel when heat is not there." The young man continued, "Sir, is there such a thing as dark?" Once again the professor responded, "Of course there

is."

And once again, the student replied, "Actually, sir, darkness does not exist. Darkness is really only the absence of light. Darkness is only a term developed to describe what happens when there is no light present."

Finally, the young man asked, "Sir, is there such a thing as evil?"

The professor responded, "Of course, we have rapes, murders and violence everywhere in the world; those things are evil."

The student replied, "Actually, sir, evil does not exist. Evil is simply the absence of God. Evil is a term developed to describe the absence of God. God did not create evil. It isn't like truth, or love which exist as virtues like heat or light. Evil is simply the state where God is not present, like cold without heat, or darkness without light."

The professor had nothing to say.....

Be full of Christ today, there is no room for anything else.

Wisdom: Purgatory

Pope John Paul II told his general audience that purgatory is the state we enter after we die to be purged of every trace of sin before entering heaven.

Following up on previous general audience in which he dealt with heaven and hell, the Holy Father said that anyone who had led a less than perfect life but was still destined for heaven would spend time in purgatory. *"Before we enter into God's Kingdom, every trace of sin within us must be eliminated, every imperfection in our soul must be corrected. This is exactly what takes place in purgatory,"* he said.

Repeating his theme of the two previous talks, the Pope said purgatory was not a physical place either. He said, *"(Purgatory) does not indicate a place, but a condition of life. Those who, after death, live in this state of purification are already immersed in the love of Christ, which lifts them out of the residue of imperfection."* He then encouraged Christians to pray and do good works on behalf of those in Purgatory.

Hindi proverb:

"If you have two loaves of bread, Give one to the poor, sell the other and buy hyacinths to feed your soul."

Story: Nothing But Problems

"The man who has no problems is out of the game." (Elbert Hubbard)

On Christmas Eve 1993, Norman Vincent Peale, the author of the all-time bestseller *The Power of Positive Thinking*, died at age 95. He was at home surrounded by love, peace and tender care. Norman Vincent Peale deserved nothing less. His positive-thinking ministry had brought peace and renewed confidence to generations of people who realized from his sermons, speeches, radio shows and books that we are responsible for the condition we're in. Since he felt God did not make junk, Norman reminded us that we have two choices every morning when we wake up: we can choose to feel good about ourselves or choose to feel lousy. I can still hear Norman clearly shouting out, "Why would you choose the latter?"

I first met Norman in July 1986. Larry Hughes, who was president of my publishing company, William Morrow & Co., had suggested we think about writing a book together on ethics. We decided to do that, and the next two years working with Norman on *The Power of Ethical Management* was one of the greatest delights I have ever had in my life. Ever since that first meeting, Norman had a great impact on my life. He always contended that positive thinkers get positive results because they are not afraid of problems. In fact, rather than thinking of a problem as something that is negative and ought to be removed as quickly as possible, Norman felt problems were a sign of life. To illustrate that point, here is one of his favorite stories, one I have used frequently in my presentations:

"One day I was walking down the street, when I saw my friend George approaching. It was evident from his downtrodden look that he wasn't over-flowing with the ecstasy and exuberance of human existence, which is a high-class way of saying George was dragging bottom.

Naturally I asked him, "How are you, George?" While that was meant to be a routine inquiry, George took me very seriously and for 15 minutes he enlightened me on how he felt. And the more he

talked, the worse I felt. Finally I said to him, "Well, George, I'm sorry to see you in such a depressed state. How did you get this way?" That really set him off. "It's my problems," he said. "Problems -nothing hut problems. I'm fed up with problems. If you could get rid of all my problems, I would contribute \$5,000 to your favorite charity."

Well now, I am never one to turn a deaf ear to such an offer, and so I meditated, ruminated and cogitated on the proposition and came up with an answer that I thought was pretty good. I said. 'Yesterday I went to a place where thousands of people reside. As far as I could determine, not one of them has any problems. Would you like to go there?'

"When can we leave? That sounds like my kind of place," answered George. "If that's the case, George," I said, "I'll be happy to take you tomorrow to Woodlawn Cemetery because the only people I know who don't have any problems are dead."

I love that story. It really puts life in perspective. I heard Norman say many times, "If you have no problems at all -I warn you- you're in grave jeopardy- you're on the way out and you don't know it! If you don't believe you have any problems, I suggest that you immediately race from wherever you are, jump into your car and drive home as fast but as safely as possible, run into your house, and go straight to your bedroom and slam the door. Then get on your knees and pray, 'What's the matter, Lord? Don't you trust me anymore? Give me some problems."

A Time to Laugh (102)

Idiot # 4

A motorist was unknowingly caught in an automated speed zone, it not only measured his speed using radar it also photographed his car. He later received in the mail a ticket for \$40.00 and a photo of his car.

Instead of payment, he sent the police department a photograph of 40.00. Several days later, he received another letter from the police department that contained a picture of handcuffs. He paid the \$40.00.

Idiot # 5

Guy walked into a little corner store with a shotgun and demanded all the cash from the cash drawer. After the cashier put the cash in a bag, the robber saw a bottle of scotch that he wanted behind the counter on the shelf. So he told the cashier to put it in the bag as well, but he refused and said, "I don't believe you are over 21." The robber said he was, but the clerk still refused to give it to him because he didn't believe him. At this point the robber took his driver's license out of his wallet and gave it to the clerk. The clerk looked it over, agreed that the man was in fact over 21 and he put the scotch in the bag. The robber then ran from the store with his loot. The cashier promptly called the police and gave them the name and address of the robber that he got off the license. They arrested the robber two hours later.

Idiot # 6

A pair of Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first one shouted, "Nobody move!" When his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.

Idiot # 7

Arkansas: Seems this guy wanted some beer pretty badly. He decided that he'd just throw a cinder block through a liquor store window, grab some booze, and run. So he lifted the cinder block and heaved it over his head at the window. The cinder block bounced back and hit the would-be thief on the head, knocking him unconscious. The liquor store window was made of Plexiglas. The whole event was caught on videotape.

Famous Quotes (10)

Antipathy

--A cruel story runs on wheels, and every hand oils the wheels as they run. (Louise Ouida)

--The offender never pardons. (George Herbert)

--All the while you studied revenge, you are tearing your own wound open.

Antiques

--Two kinds of families are likely to have a house full of antique furniture: the kind with money and the kind with children.

--An antique is an object that has made a round trip to the attic.

--If it is hard to dust, it's probably an antique.

--One man's junk is another man's rare antique.

--Antiques aren't always as old as they are cracked up to be.

Anxiety

--Trouble is the common denominator of living. It is the great equalizer. (Ann Landers)

--Neurotic means he is not as sensible as I am, and psychotic means he's even worse than my brother-in-law. (Karl Menninger)

--Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained. (Arthur Roche)

--The thinner the ice, the more anxious is everyone to see whether it will bear. (Josh Billings)

--Where everything is bad, it must be good to know the worst. (Francis Bradley)

--We have a lot of anxieties, and one cancels out another very often. (Winston Churchill)

--God never built a Christian strong enough to carry today's duties and tomorrow's anxieties piled on the top of them. (Theodore Ledyard Cuyler)

--How much have cost us the evils that never happened! (Thomas Jefferson)

--Borrow trouble for yourself, if that's your nature, but don't lend it to your neighbors. (Rudyard Kipling)

Apartment

--An apartment building is a place where the landlord and the tenant are both trying to raise the rent.

--I finally figured out how to make a landlord paint your apartment—move out.

--The walls in my apartment are so thin that I recently asked a visitor a question and I got three answers.

Apathy

One good thing about apathy is you don't have to exert yourself to show you're sincere about it.

Aphory

--Everything has been said before, but since nobody listens, we have to keep going back and beginning all over again. (André Gide)

--Good things, when short, are twice as good. (Baltasar Gracian)

--Men's maxims reveal their characters. (Marquis de Vauvenargues)

--The only way to read a book of aphorisms without being bored is to open it at random and, having found something that interests you, close the book and meditate. (Prince de Ligne)

--Whatever sentence will bear to be read twice we may be sure was thought twice. (Henry David Thoreau)

--Solomon made a book of proverbs, but a book of proverbs never made a Solomon. (Anonymous)

--All the good maxims already exist in the world; we just fail to apply them. (Blaise Pascal)