



Bringing Home the Word



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 17, 2016

His First Miracle

By Janel Esker

I'm not shy about it—I love wine. It's hard to beat a home-cooked meal accompanied by a glass of Chardonnay or Zinfandel. I also enjoy the language of wine, snippets of which I've picked up over the years. Connoisseurs describe wines with words like “earthy,” “buttery,” “has notes of pineapple on the finish,” and other elaborate descriptors. I don't always get the language, but these aficionados obviously know a good wine when they taste one.

Today's Gospel doesn't offer descriptors such as “mellow” or “earthy”

in reference to the wine at the wedding at Cana—it simply indicates that it's very good wine. The party may have been winding down, but with such fine wine brought out I imagine it may have gone well into the night. What a place for Jesus to perform his first miracle, his first sign.

But Jesus didn't perform signs just to show off extraordinary power. His miracles always revealed the reign of God and its breaking into the world. From this particular miracle, we can know God's reign is about *newness*—the wine was fresh and delicious. We can know God's reign is about *abundance*—about 180 gallons of wine were transformed! We can know God's reign is about *life-giving celebration*—the wine flowed freely at a joyous wedding feast.

New, abundant, life-giving, celebratory—these words describe God's reign and power. Even to this wine-lover, they sound far better than a “buttery” Chardonnay or an “earthy” Shiraz. I'll take the new wine of God's reign—intoxicating in its joy and life-giving power. †

A Word from Pope Francis



“Let us remember... key words for living in peace and joy in the family: ‘may I,’ ‘thank you,’ and ‘sorry.’ In our family, when we are not intrusive and ask ‘may I,’ in our family when we are not selfish and learn to say ‘thank you,’ and when in a family one realizes he has done something wrong and knows how to say ‘sorry,’ in that family there is peace and joy. Let us remember these words.”

—Angelus, December 29, 2013

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 62:1–5

“No more shall people call you ‘Forsaken’...but you shall be called ‘My Delight.’”

1 Corinthians 12:4–11

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit.”

John 2:1–11

“The headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from.”

PRAYER

Lord, you are present in the love of spouses and family. Be present to all husbands, wives, mothers, and fathers. Multiply for them the wine of your joy. May their road to heaven be paved with tenderness, obedience, and celebration.

—Adapted from “Jesus, Guest at the Wedding of Cana,” from *A Garden of Prayers* by Lucien Deiss, CSSp

Family Meals: Sacred Time

By Judith Dunlap

A friend recently told me a joke that I had heard decades ago: *How does a suburban mother call her kids for dinner? "Everybody in the car!"* The joke has been around so long because its truth resonates with so many families. According to a poll conducted by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard School of Public Health released in 2013, 46 percent of families find it hard to eat dinner together, particularly due to work schedules and extracurricular activities. Statistics such as this are not surprising when we consider the busy and complicated lives we live. Extended hours, long commutes, and a barrage of scheduled activities for children make family time a precious commodity.

Yet spending time together, particularly sharing a family meal, is consistently listed as a factor and indicator of strong families and overall health: "More frequent family dinners are related to fewer emotional and behavioral problems, greater emotional well-being, more trusting and helpful behaviors towards others and higher life satisfaction" (*Journal of Adolescent Health*, April 2012). Another quality is commitment.

One way to commit to your family is to take time for at least one special family meal per week. Remember: it's not the



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- What sacramental elements (water, oil, bread and wine) speak most deeply to you?
- How does your parish live out the gifts of the Spirit?

food that makes it special; it's having everyone sitting around the table. Make a ritual out of the occasions. Light a candle or display a centerpiece and hold hands during a blessing or grace. Turn the all electronic devices off, and don't allow anyone to leave the table until everyone

is finished eating. Encourage and model positive, affirming conversation: no preaching, no scolding. A typical starting point is to take turns sharing something that happened that day (or week). Think about the times Jesus spent in table fellowship with both disciples and strangers, saints and sinners. He is no less present at your table. Family mealtime is as sacred as the prayer it begins with and the people present therein.

Mexican Hot Chocolate

The Aztecs prepared a royal drink called *chocolatl* by grinding cocoa beans with cinnamon, anise, chilies, and vanilla pods. The Spanish changed the recipe, taking out the chilies and adding sugar.

This recipe makes one large mug of hot chocolate (two servings). It is ready in ten minutes and can be adjusted to suit your tastes. Don't forget the whipped cream and marshmallows!

- 3 tablespoons instant hot-chocolate mix
- 1 tablespoon chocolate syrup
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch chili powder
- ¼ cup milk
- ¾ cup boiling water

In a large mug, mix the hot-chocolate mix, syrup, cinnamon, and chili powder. Pour in milk. Add boiling water and stir.

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 18–23

Mon. Weekday:
1 Samuel 15:16–23 / Mark 2:18–22


Tue. Weekday:
1 Samuel 16:1–13 / Mark 2:23–28

Wed. Weekday:
1 Samuel 17:32–33, 37, 40–51 / Mark 3:1–6

Thu. St. Agnes: 1 Samuel 18:6–9; 19:1–7 / Mark 3:7–12

Fri., Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children:
1 Samuel 24:3–21 / Mark 3:13–19

Sat. Weekday: 2 Samuel 1:1–4, 11–12, 19, 23–27 / Mark 3:20–21

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