

Read

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8,
9-10

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

John 2:1-11

LIVING THE WORD

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 20, 2019



REFLECTION

Today's readings focus on gifts: gifts we are called to share with others in our community and the great gift Jesus shares at the Wedding at Cana. Paul reminds the first followers in 1 Corinthians that each person has their own unique gifts. These gifts must be identified and shared with the community in order to uplift others' gifts. We are not solitary creatures set apart from one another, but together with our gifts we are in the same Spirit. Sometimes it is difficult to identify what these are when self-doubt creeps in. Instead of giving any time to these doubts, consider the miracle Jesus performed at Cana. Jesus responds to Mary's request to help the young couple who ran out of wine at their wedding. Jesus not only performs this miracle, but he makes it the finest wine at the wedding. Thus, "His disciples began to believe in him" (John 2:11). Even today, John's reporting of this miracle remains an important meditation to consider. We need signs like this in our lives just as the disciples did to help us on our journey. Take a look around today at the many gifts that are present in your life and give thanks.

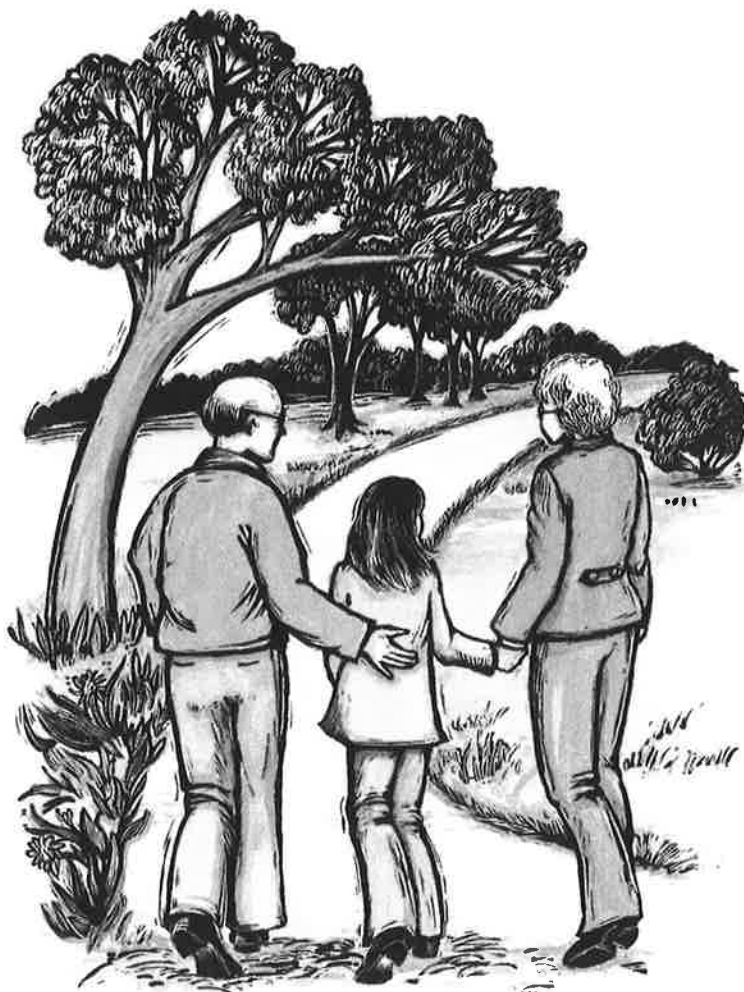
? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 speak to you as you pray with this reading?
- ❖ How might you tap into these spiritual gifts in your daily life?



ACTION

Sometimes we need help identifying our unique gifts. This week, take some time to ask four people whose opinion matters to you (friend, parent, coach, youth minister, etc.) what they see as your best gift. Are there similarities or differences? Are you surprised by the responses? Did you learn something about yourself? Take one of these gifts that you would like to focus on developing more and create a visual aid to put up in your room or to set as the wallpaper to your phone or laptop. Meditate on this gift and live it out!



Introduction to **ORDINARY TIME** during Winter



The Season

While short in duration, only a month this year, this season bridges the Incarnation with the ministry, teaching, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord. Through key Gospel narratives, we hear the stories of Jesus' first miracles and teaching and we learn that not everyone is open to his message. These are important lessons for us, particularly teens, as we consider the call of discipleship and its consequences in our lives.

Ordinary Time Environment

The place where you gather with teens should mirror the liturgical environment in the church worship space. Even though we return to green for this brief season, our environment will often be a bit more sparse, reflecting the shortness of daytime sun, and the dormancy of many plants. Returning to the idea of Ordinary Time as a period of growth in discipleship, let your liturgical environment focus on the dormant stage of plant life at this time of year. Depending on your climate, the barrenness of the earth may be more or less severe. Just as plants need times of slower growth and even periods to lie fallow, we, too, need phases of rest and rejuvenation in our faith life. Gather bare tree branches into a vase or put out a pot or jar of soil with no plant in it, only seeds deep under the dirt. A grapevine wreath or branches of grapevine can be used and decorated with green ribbon or other light touches of green, such as evergreen sprigs.

Ordinary Time with Teens

While the pace of winter may be a bit slower for some of us, for teens, classes, activities, athletics, and relationships continue in their normal routines. This produces an opportunity through which to

help your teens develop a regular rhythm of Gospel reflection, prayer, and application of faith in their daily lives. Winter is the perfect time to encourage youth to take the Gospel to heart day by day, week by week. This time could also be an opportunity to lead a retreat with teens. Students are most likely not as busy with sports and outside activities. Snow or barren branches serve as images of our souls, laid open to God. Develop a day-long or weekend retreat for teens during this season. Ideas include the following:

Silent Time: Challenge the teens to spend a few hours in silence without iPods, cell phones, or even friends to talk to. Encourage them to explore this stillness and how they react to it. This may be both the most difficult aspect of the retreat and the most meaningful.

Affirmation: Teens so desperately need to know they are good and loved. Consider an activity that reassures them of their worth and the support of the group. This could be asking each teen to write something nice about each of the others, and later sharing these with the individual and allowing them to take them home. It could involve a special Scripture written out or on the back of a print as a token of the retreat. You might ask parents to write a letter of affirmation to their son or daughter, to be read on retreat.

Shared Activity: This could be making the concluding meal together, such as by chopping vegetables for soup, baking bread, and serving one another. It could be a service project such as visiting elderly religious in residence at the retreat site, hearing their stories and singing youth praise songs for them. It could be a ropes course or other team-building exercise led by a local community facility such as the YMCA.



January 20, 2019

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #66C

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

John 2:1-11

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

After the joy of the Advent and Christmas seasons, we begin Ordinary Time. This is also the beginning of a new civic year. For teens, this means returning to school routines, homework, and activities. For our Church, Ordinary Time provides us with an opportunity to discover mission and discipleship in our daily lives. Today's Gospel passage from John challenges us to intentionally become Jesus' followers by acting to share our faith and love with the world around us.

Liturgical Calendar Connection

The following week is filled with saintly solemnities. We learn the virtues of chastity and forgiveness from St. Agnes (January 21). St. Francis de Sales (January 24) teaches us to live devout lives. The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul (January 25) encourages us to look at opportunities for profound conversion and our call to boldly proclaim the Word with our lives. The Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children (January 22) reminds us to pray and advocate for the sanctity of every human life.

Q FOCUS: *Strive to bless others by doing the will of Jesus.*

Church Teaching Connection

In his papal teaching *Redemptoris Mater*, Pope Saint John Paul II taught the Church about Mary's

unique role and purpose in the Gospel accounts and in our personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "Mary places herself between her Son and mankind in the reality of their wants, needs and sufferings. She puts herself 'in the middle,' that is to say she acts as a mediatrix not as an outsider, but in her position as mother" (*Redemptoris mater*, 21). Mary is the Mother of God, the Mother of our Church, and our mother who makes known our needs to her son, Jesus.

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

John 2:1-11

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

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 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.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Picture yourself at a wedding reception. The bride and groom have prepared for this day for many months. The liturgy is over and the celebration has just begun. Now imagine that everyone sits down to a feast, and suddenly there is no wine.

► **How will you toast the happy couple? Will this embarrassing moment be a sign of problems to come?**

In Jesus' time, a wedding feast typically lasted many days. While the culture was different, this was still a moment for celebration.

► **Have you ever heard stories about your parents' wedding? How was this day the start of your family's faith life?**

When she learned that the wine was nearly gone, Mary told Jesus what was happening. Immaculately conceived to bear our savior, Mary was intimately connected with Jesus since the moment the angel announced Jesus' Incarnation in her womb. Like any mother, she had watched her son grow in faith. She knew in her heart that God had a special calling for him. When Mary told the servers at the

wedding, “Do whatever he tells you,” she was saying the same thing to us. We read later in John's account of the Gospel (see John 19:26–27) that at the moment of his Crucifixion, Jesus said to his mother, “Woman, behold your son.” To John, his beloved disciple, Jesus said, “Behold your mother.” In giving Mary to John, Jesus also gave Mary to us as a mother, to draw us ever closer to his love. At Cana, Mary spoke with confidence, knowing not only that Jesus could help this married couple, but also that he was destined for much more than this initial miracle. This mother who carried our Messiah in her womb, who watched him teach in the synagogue, who was present at Cana, and who would stand alongside the Cross was Jesus' first disciple. She has always called us to follow Jesus and to do his will in our lives.

► **Even though she was his mother, how was Mary uniquely positioned to understand God's plan for Jesus and to give her life to follow her son?**

► **What is Mary's part in your life? How does learning more about Mary's yes to God's will for her life encourage you to follow Jesus more closely?**

Jesus instructed the wedding servers to fill six large stone vessels with water. These jars were not normally used for weddings, but instead for the ceremonial washings required by Jewish tradition. The servers did as Jesus asked; they filled the jars all the way to the top. Next, Jesus told them to take out some of the liquid they had just poured. Imagine how surprised the waiters were when it was instantaneously turned into wine! Their boss, who had no idea where the extra wine had come from, complimented the bride and groom. He was surprised that they had saved the best wine for last. Along with Mary, Jesus' new disciples were watching this event. They were new disciples of this teacher, but this miracle helped them to believe in him and to give up everything to follow this Messiah.

► **How would you have reacted if you witnessed a miracle in Jesus' time?**

► **Have you ever witnessed a “miracle,” small or large, that was an answer to your prayers? How did this increase your faith in God?**

The disciples saw this miracle and believed.

► How does what you read in this Gospel help you have more trust in God's ability to transform the parts of your life that need changing? How will you invite him to make this transformation in you?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 124.

How is Mary a part of your relationship with Jesus?

How is Jesus using your life to transform the hearts of your friends and family?

What helps you believe in God's plan for your life?

Act on the Word

Cana Goes Viral

For this activity, you will need a Bible, paper, pens, and access to a cell phone camera or video camera.

Divide teens into groups of four or five. Invite each small group to create a viral campaign to share the message of the wedding feast at Cana. Viral marketing seeks to create a "buzz" about a product, activity, or event by creating a message that is highly engaging, original in scope, and likely to be shared with others. Closer to Jesus' time, the spreading of the Good News in Scripture was done orally and then later it was written down. Modern day technology enables our teens to be evangelists with new and creative tools.

Groups should reread the Gospel passage and envision a highly creative and compelling campaign to share the Good News of John's account of the Gospel. Groups should use a cell phone camera or video camera to create their campaign ingredients, which might include brief videos, compelling photographs, hashtag messaging, and other means of

retelling the Gospel's main teaching components. Priorities for messaging include the following:

- ✧ Major events at the wedding feast
- ✧ Mary's role in informing Jesus of the wine shortage
- ✧ The servants' decision to follow Mary's instructions to "Do whatever he tells you"
- ✧ The headwaiter's surprise when he learns that the best wine has been saved for last by the bride and groom
- ✧ The disciples' witnessing of what has happened and their decision to follow Jesus

Groups can create a series of still images to comprise a mock social media "story" or film a brief three minute or less video. Each group should create a compelling hashtag theme for their campaign (for example #dowhathesays). Groups should take half the meeting time to create their viral campaign and half the time to present it to their peers. Teens can then come together to assess:

- ✧ What was unique about each campaign?
- ✧ How could these viral campaigns be employed to spread the Good News to other teens?
- ✧ How is Jesus calling us to follow him in today's world?

Closing Prayer

*Gracious and loving God,
fill us with your love,
let us always greet both friend and stranger
with the Good News of salvation;
let the hearts of all who hear your voice
be gladdened.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.