

## Reflection for the Third Sunday of Epiphany

### *The Wedding at Cana*

*2 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' 4 And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' 5 His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' 6 Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. 8 He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. 9 When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' 11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (John 2:1-11)*

One of the things I've missed most about this last year has been getting together with family and friends for celebrations. I'm sure I'm not alone. There were no weddings on the agenda for our family but I'm aware of so many whose marriage celebrations have had to be postponed. In the context of our church family we've had to put off having a social gathering to welcome our new vicar. By the time restrictions are lifted, Father Murray won't be new any more. But I think we should still have a party, because parties are important. Even Jesus loved a party.

He was there at the wedding in Cana. It was obviously some family connection of Jesus who was getting married because Jesus and his mother Mary were both there. You can imagine that Jesus, when he'd been invited had been told he could bring his mates – those followers who were hanging on to his every word as their revered teacher. I wonder what Mary's friends thought of this young man that they'd seen growing up. Maybe they were a bit in awe of him now that he was a popular intellectual even if he had seen fit to come to the wedding.

Mary had no such boundaries though. He was still the boy that she'd brought up and she knew that when things were about to go pear shaped for the wedding family Jesus would be able to sort it. So she had a word. Judging from the text, Jesus wasn't best pleased to have his mother suggesting what he ought to do. What thirty-year old son would be! At the same time it seems that he took note, maybe because he recognised the wisdom of his mother, the only one who could possibly know the extent of his power. So Jesus made the wine flow and the party continued.

This was the first of the signs that revealed the glory of Jesus. When I consider that this was a means for people to enjoy themselves I wonder whether we as a church should be putting more emphasis on partying. At the moment we're weighed down with concerns for each other, for the country, for the world. Jesus came to lift the weight off our shoulders. The first revelation of his glory was to lift the worries from the shoulders of a party host.

I can't help thinking, though, that this first miracle owes a lot to Jesus's mother Mary. Sitting on the sidelines she could see what was happening and called on Jesus to act. Times of lockdown may have felt as if we're having to sit out of the party but they may have given us the chance to reflect on the life of our church community. Perhaps, as we come to a clearer view of what might be when we can once more worship without restrictions, we can, as Mary did, call on Jesus to lift our worries and to lead us forward in his way. Then when we gather again in person, face to face, we'll find love and joy flowing in abundance just as the wine flowed in the wedding at Cana. *Amen*

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