

## St Pius & St Anthony Homily 2nd Sunday Ordinary Time Year C (2024)

Saved the best until last! What dramatic irony in this miracle at Cana, who knows what? Imagine that conversation between the headwaiter and the bridegroom, the headwaiter (whose neck just got saved by a sudden refill of wine stocks) goes to compliment the bridegroom (who had to smile awkwardly blank back to him) about how good he was to hold back/serve the best drink at the end of the wedding feasts. Neither of them knew where the wine came from, and I wonder if the groom even knew of the first embarrassment averted, of running out of wine to start with! The only ones who know seem to know are Mary, the servants (*true workers always know what goes into getting it done!*), the disciples and Jesus. Who is behind it all? but Jesus (alpha and omega) who John says this is the first sign, certainly not the last, of his glory, yet it is virtually unknown. Jesus is the unseen Savior, not credited at all, but recall that he doesn't want any credit. He said, "It is not my hour" **yet** (John 2:4). This is why Jesus sounds dismissive of Mary. He is not at all. In fact, his response "How does your concern affect me?" is better heard as him basically saying, "What would you have me do? Maybe wrap this party up by creating a rainstorm, or creating a lot of sweet bread to distract from the low running wine?" By Mary going ahead saying, "Do whatever He tells you", she indicates they understand each other with the fullest respect. Jesus makes a similar move to this, signaling a lack of interest (to not draw attention to Himself), when in fact He is on top of everything, in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of John when he tells the disciples to go up to the Feast of Booths, and that he will stay behind in Galilee, but after they get there, He comes up later behind them (because the wrong people-guards-were on hunt for Him-Here he also says, 'It is not my hour!' (John 7:3-10).

But about this first Miracle Sign, reading the gospel closely, we might have seen something BIG coming. In chapter 1, Jesus had told an already impressed Nathanel (after Jesus saying he knew Nate already and had watched him under the tree), "Come-You will see greater things than this"(John 1:50). And I can't help but think that when John the Baptist made so much of his work being only with water, and that Jesus is the Messiah who would "baptize with the Holy Spirit.' (Jn 1:33), John was hinting about such great signs as this miracle of water turned to wine - John works in water, but Jesus works it into Spirits! And the best of Spirits

When I think of Jesus's response of filling the jars with water, I imagine the servers were thinking of the old trick of 'watering it down to stretch it out'. Like maybe you can stretch gravy by thinning it with water, or adding milk to mashed potatoes, or stretch paint by adding water, but that won't fly with wine. I think of when we kids used to get so disappointed after we grabbed the box of froot loops

or frosted flakes, and then open the fridge to discover there's no milk- Mom would say "just pour water over it", but it wasn't the same!

But with John's gospel, and Jesus, water is not only water. In two places, Jesus will say that He uniquely brings/give water that is alive! For example in John 4:14 (& 7:38) he'll say that He is *living water*, "the water I shall give ...is a spring of water welling up within a person to eternal life". So, water is not only water here!

In fact, it is very significant that John doesn't use the word miracles like Matt, Mark & Luke. No, John calls them Signs! Why? Because there is more than what you see! A Sign points to something greater, beyond itself, to a higher meaning of what is ahead. Points to more. So what may be behind this sign of Jesus miraculously transforming water into wine? I think it lies in the stone water jars! A big detail that begs for more focus, a flag of sorts, is the number of water jars! Six! Something seems off about that –looking all through John's gospel, a very distinctive thing about him is how much **he loves the number seven** (*everyone has a favorite number-John continues this love of seven throughout the Book of Revelation too!*) Sevens pop up everywhere! John outlines seven sign-miracles, John emphasizes seven "I am" statements describing who Jesus is, ("I am the vine, good shepherd, resurrection & life....."). John also, details seven Jewish feasts celebrated in his gospel, and how many disciples are on the seashore on Resurrection morning to have fish breakfast with Jesus in John 21 but 7! And (here's a kicker) if we were to count the days from the beginning of John's gospel until this wedding at Cana, it is the seventh day!

So already swimming in sevens, we come to the jars detail and we hear that there are only six water jars! Where is the seventh jar? Turns out Jesus Himself is the seventh! Notice the detail about the jars being 'stone'. In Hebrew worldview of certain foods and substances being either pure/impure, clean/unclean, the Leviticus law says that 'stone' is pure (Leviticus 6:28, 11:33-36). Not like Ceramic or clay pottery, it is impure/unclean, and to be discarded after use – no, Stone is all pure! That is getting close to Jesus. Further, right after this miracle, Jesus is going to proceed to the Temple, and do what, but Cleanse it, and who could do that but the Pure One, and Jesus will say, "Tear down this stone Temple, and in three days I will rebuild it (*John 2:19-of course talking about Temple of His body*). Not to mention the last/famous stone of Jesus which will be the stone of his tomb, that he will rise from! So, the seventh stone jar missing, He is seventh-its Himself!

But there's more, Jesus is not just the Holy Place Himself, because if we parallel the seven days of creation, alongside these first seven days in John's gospel that result in this miracle, we see that Jesus is not only the Holy Temple (body part) but also He is the Holy Rest, Holy Time and Holy Sabbath for us. Genesis and creation told us that six days were for work and the seventh day was

the refreshing, and being renewed. If in six days, we tire and empty out our energy stores or spirits-we run out of juice, then on the seventh day, we're refreshed and get refilled by the Sabbath presence of God-God of life. And Jesus brings that renewal-new life to us every visit. He takes our exhaustion and breathes new spirit into us.

So Jesus is our refreshment, our Holy Place and Holy Time. He takes our emptiness and fills it new, or he can take our tired efforts and refreshes them. He breathes new life/spirit into us, He is our Temple, and our Sabbath-our ultimate rest and refreshment. And this refilling, refreshing or resurrecting, Jesus brings to us, if only we do as Mary indicated, "Do whatever Jesus tells us". When we gather with Him, Go to Him, Get close to Him, then He brings us that rejuvenation and renewal!

## **Gospel of John's Favorite Number – Seven!**

### **Seven Signs (Miracles) of John**

1. Water Turned to Wine (John 2:1-11)
2. Healing of the (Nobleman's) Son Near Death (John 4:46-54)
3. Healing of the Lame Man at the Pool (John 5:1-17)
4. Feeding of the Five Thousand (John 6:1-15)
5. Walking on the Water (John 6:16-21)
6. Healing of the Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
7. Raising of Lazarus from the Dead (John 11:1-47)

### **First Seven Days of John's Gospel**

- Day #1      Jn 1:23-28 "This was the witness of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem..." "This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing."
- Day #2      Jn 1:29-34 "The next day..." "I have seen and I testify that he is the Son of God."
- Day #3      Jn 1:35-42 "The next day..." "You Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas-which means Rock."
- Day #4      Jn 1:43-51 "The next day..." "...you will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending over the Son of man."
- Day #5-6
- Day #7      Jn 2:1 "On the third day"...[from the last day which was day 4] there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee."

### **7 Jewish Feasts Mentioned in John**

1. (Booths?) unnamed Feast (John 1, Jesus' return to Galilee).

2. Feast of Passover (1<sup>st</sup> 2:13).
3. Unnamed Feast (5:1, a Sabbath).
4. Feast of Passover (2<sup>nd</sup> 6:4).
5. Feast of Booths (7:2).
6. Feast of the Dedication (*Hanukkah*, 10:22).
7. Feast of Passover (3<sup>rd</sup> & last 12:1).

### **Seven 'I Am' Statements of John**

1. 6:35 "I AM the bread of life"
2. 8:12 "I AM the light of the world"
3. 10:7 "I AM the gate for the sheep"
4. 10:11 "I AM the good shepherd"
5. 11:25 "I AM the resurrection and the life"
6. 14:6 "I AM the way and the truth and the life"
7. 15:1 "I AM the true vine"

### **Seven disciples at Resurrection Scene of John 21**

John 21:1-2 "After this, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were 1)Simon Peter, 2)Thomas called Didymus, 3)Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, 4&5)Zebedee's sons, and 6&7) two others of his disciples.

### **Seven Questions – Teaching Episodes to Believers**

1. Response to Phillip and Andrew (12:22).
2. Response to the people (12:29-50).
3. Responses to Peter (13:6-14:4).
4. Response to Thomas (14:5-7).
5. Response to Phillip (14:8-21).
6. Response to Judas (not Iscariot) (14:22-16:16).
7. Response to all disciples (16:17-33).