

The miracle/lack of Cana

Homily given by Fr Badeea N Butrus, C.Ss.R.

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We can find many things lacking or missing in the Cana story, like: *Why isn't the mother of Jesus called by her name? Why is the mother of Jesus the one who takes care of the lack of wine? Some speak without doing anything! Others do without saying a word! The groom is asked, but does not answer, the bride is absent. The headwaiter tastes the wine, but does not know where it comes from.*

It seems that this gospel passage was written as a sign of lack.

In the Cana story, there is always something missing, that nothing and no one is complete.

One may wonder why generations of Christians have been telling this story for centuries. A story full of things lacking or missing!

It seems that this event at Cana was lived and has been told under the sign of lack. What does this mean?

Firstly, we find that the Cana story starts with this: *On the 3rd day there was a wedding...* The third day ... We are at the 3rd day: the Day of Resurrection. The day when death is no longer seen as an end, but as a passage!

A day where lack may not be experienced as a deprivation but as an opportunity to be open to something beyond ourselves

It's true! In the Cana story we can speak of good wine, of banquets & food...

But we can also speak of lack and our big need for God

The Cana passage reminds me of the story of a bishop (William J. Bausch, *A World of Stories*, p244) who always liked to tell the story of a young man who stood at the door of the Cathedral to insult people coming for the services. The bishop said that one day, the Cathedral pastor went to meet this young man.

The pastor said to the young man: "Look, I'll help you to do what you like! I ask you to enter the sanctuary with me. I challenge you to look at the figure of Christ and shout as loud as you can: *Christ, you died on the cross for me, and I do not care*"

The young man entered the sanctuary and shouted with all his might as he looked at the crucifix: "Christ, you died on the cross for me and I do not care." The priest says, "Okay, one more time."

When the young man finished, the priest said:
Okay, can you say it again!

The young man raised his fist, looked at the figure of Christ, but not a word came out of his mouth. He could not look at the face of Christ and insult him again.

That young man was me, said the Bishop! I thought I did not need God and I realized that, on the contrary, I needed him.

The family of the wedding at Cana did not recognize their need and their lack. But the presence of the Lord filled their needs & lacks. Without God we can do nothing.

According to the Oriental customs, lack of food or wine in a banquet is an outrage! Without Jesus the marriage of Cana would have turned into an outrage. Without Jesus the Cana feast is just a regular gathering that ends with not having enough wine.

But with Jesus, the scandal of the lack of wine is transformed into a miracle.

I thought I did not need God and I realized that, on the contrary, I needed him. Said the young rebel, who later became a bishop!

The only difference between the two stories is that the young rebel, who later became a bishop, recognized his need for God!

But the Cana people rejoiced in God's blessings & benefits without recognizing their need for him.

The Cana story ends with the recognition of the wine's high quality.

But the married couple don't recognize who the source behind it is.

Dear friends, the Cana story challenges us with this:

Living the lack as a liberation and as an opportunity to be open to something beyond ourselves...

They have no wine...said Mary to Jesus!

Happy are those who accept to live their lack under the shadow of God.