

Meditation on the Wedding at Cana

Introduction

If God is everywhere and we are seeking to use our entire lives and bodies to grasp who God is, then it follows that we should be able to use all our minds – both the intellectual and the imaginative to try and come closer to God, says Ignatius, an old church father of the late middle ages. He encouraged people to use their imagination when they were reading the Bible, as a way of entering into the story.

It can open new ways of seeing things, - especially when a story is as well-known as ours is today.

Very appropriate for meditation are stories of Jesus. So, for today I chose, according to the lectionary, the Wedding at Cana.

Settle down comfortably but not too comfortably – you need to be both: relaxed & attentive.

Let us pray:

Prayer

God, our inspiration, we ask for grace that each of us may hear your voice in this passage. Grant us the grace to respond with our being and our lives. Amen.

Bible Text

Wedding at Cana, John 2

1-2 Three days later there was a wedding in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his disciples were guests also.

3 When they started running low on wine at the wedding banquet, Jesus' mother told him, "They're just about out of wine."

4 Jesus said, "Is that any of our business, Mother—yours or mine? This isn't my time. Don't push me."

5 She went ahead anyway, telling the servants, "Whatever he tells you, do it."

6-7 Six stoneware water pots were there, used by the Jews for ritual washings. Each held twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus ordered the servants, "Fill the pots with water." And they filled them to the brim.

8 "Now fill your pitchers and take them to the host," Jesus said, and they did.

9-10 When the host tasted the water that had become wine (he didn't know what had just happened but the servants, of course, knew), he called out to the bridegroom, "Everybody I know begins with their finest wines and after the guests have had their fill brings in the cheap stuff. But you've saved the best till now!"

Guided Meditation

1 Three days later there was a wedding in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his disciples were guests also.

Imagine yourself coming to the wedding – you might be a guest, perhaps one of the neighbours, or perhaps one of the servants.

What does the home look like?

Are you inside or outside?

Who are the other guests? What are they wearing? How are they behaving? What atmosphere is there?

Are people happy? Joyful? Having fun? Loving life?

What kind of families are involved?

The bride's and the bridegrooms... Who are their parents?

How are things laid out?

Long tables with beautiful pottery and lovely flowers?

What about the food?

Can you smell food – what is it?

Are you eating or drinking?

Does it taste good?

Are you touching the table, the food?

Can you see the couple?

Can you see Jesus?

Can you see Mary?

3 When they started running low on wine at the wedding banquet, Jesus' mother told him, "They're just about out of wine."

4 Jesus said, "Is that any of our business, Mother—yours or mine? This isn't my time. Don't push me."

Have you tasted the wine?

What was it like?

Can you hear Mary?

How does she look, what is her tone of voice?

Can you hear Jesus reply?

How does he look?

What is the tone of his voice?

5 She went ahead anyway, telling the servants, "Whatever he tells you, do it."

Can you see the servants?

How do they look?

How does Mary speak to them?

What do you think about this?

6-7 Six stoneware water pots were there, used by the Jews for ritual washings. Each held twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus ordered the servants, "Fill the pots with water." And they filled them to the brim.

Where are the waterpots?

What shape are they?

What colour?

Are you near them?
Do you touch them?
Where is Jesus?
Can you see what is going on?
How do they fill up the jars?
How long does it take?
Can you hear the water going into the jars or is it too far away.

8 "Now fill your pitchers from the waterpots and take them to the host," So they did. What is Jesus doing and saying – how do the servants respond? Can you see what is happening?

9-10 When the host tasted the water that had become wine (he didn't know what had just happened but the servants, of course, knew), he called out to the bridegroom, "Everybody I know begins with their finest wines and after the guests have had their fill brings in the cheap stuff. But you've saved the best till now!"

Do you hear the host?
Can you see and hear him speaking with the bridegroom?
Or does someone tell you the story later?
What will the bridegroom say to the bride? His parents? Her parents? His friends?
Does he say something at all or keep the miracle a secret?

Have you got some of the wine? Can you taste it?
Was it one of the best wines you ever drank?
What does the comment of the host make you think?
When Jesus is giving something, he always gives the best, and he gives it all...
Will people understand?
How are the guests and servants responding?
What is Jesus doing?
Where is Mary?

Picture the feast... the colours, the music, the dances... People enjoying the fullness of life!

Silence

Slowly come back from the feast...
Let us ask some questions.

What is my response to this passage?
Was there anything new I noticed in imagining the scene?
Which water of mine could Jesus turn into costly wine?
How does the story make me feel about Jesus?

Is there anything I would want to say to Jesus?
Jesus' action guaranteed happiness and joy at the feast.
Wine as a gift to bring about happiness...
What is it that I could give?

Group Discussion

In small groups of two or three share something of the experience of the meditation. Write it on the red wine drops which you find in the basket in the middle of the church. (5 minutes)

Now come to the microphone and share some of your ideas. Then put you drop of wine into the jug placed on the altar.

Prayer

Let us finish with the prayer Desmond Tutu wrote for this story: Dear God, help me to use my gifts for your glory and honour. Amen.