



Pope Francis Angelus Saint Peter's Square

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POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 17 January 2016

[**Multimedia**]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

This Sunday's Gospel presents the prodigious event that occurred at Cana, a village in Galilee, during a wedding feast also attended by Mary and Jesus, with his first disciples (cf. Jn 2:1-11). The Mother points out to her Son that the wine has run out, and, after responding that his hour had not yet come, Jesus nevertheless accepts her request and gives to the bride and groom the best wine of the entire feast. The Evangelist underlines that this was the first of the signs Jesus performed; it "manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him" (v. 11).

Miracles, thus, are extraordinary signs that accompany the Good News and have the purpose of causing or strengthening faith in Jesus. In the miracle performed at Cana, we are able to glimpse an act of benevolence on the part of Jesus toward the bride and groom, a sign of God's blessing on the marriage. The love between a man and a woman is therefore a good path through which to live the Gospel, that is, to set out with joy on the path of holiness.

Yet the miracle at Cana does not pertain only to spouses. Every human person is called to encounter the Lord in his or her life. Christian faith is a gift which we receive in Baptism and which allows us to encounter God. Faith intersects times of joy and pain, of light and darkness, as in every authentic experience of love. The narrative of the wedding at Cana invites us to rediscover that Jesus does not present himself to us as a judge ready to condemn our faults, nor as a commander who imposes upon us to blindly follow his orders; he is manifest as Saviour of mankind, as brother, as our elder brother, Son of the Father: he presents himself as he who responds to the expectations and promises of joy that dwell in the heart of each one of us.

Thus we can ask ourselves: do I really know the Lord like this? Do I feel him close to me, to my life? Am I responding to him on the wavelength of that spousal love which he manifests each day to everyone, to every human being? It is about realizing that Jesus looks for us and invites us to make room in the inner reaches of our heart. In this walk of faith with him we are not left alone: we have received the gift of the Blood of Christ. The large stone jars that Jesus had filled with water in order to transform it into wine (v. 7) are a sign of the passage from the old to the new covenant: in place of the water used for the rites of purification, we have received the Blood of Jesus, poured out in a sacramental way in the Eucharist and in the bloodstained way of the Passion and of the Cross. The Sacraments, which originate from the Pascal Mystery, instill in us supernatural strength and enable us to experience the infinite mercy of God.

May the Virgin Mary, model of meditation of the words and acts of the Lord, help us to rediscover with faith the beauty and richness of the Eucharist and of the other Sacraments, which render present God's faithful love for us. In this way we fall ever more in love with the Lord Jesus, our Bridegroom, and we go to meet him with our lamps alight with our joyous faith, thus becoming his witnesses in the world.

After the Angelus:

Dear brothers and sisters, today the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, taking place in the context of the **Holy Year of Mercy**, is also celebrated as the Jubilee of Migrants. Therefore, I am pleased to greet with great affection the ethnic communities present here, all of you, from various regions of Italy, especially Lazio. Dear migrants and refugees, each of you carries within you a story, a culture, precious values; and often, sadly, also experiences of misery, oppression, fear. Your presence in this Square is a sign of hope in God. Do not let them rob you of the hope and joy of living, which springs from the experience of divine mercy, thanks also to the people who welcome you and help you. May your passing through the Holy Door and the Mass which you will experience shortly, fill your heart with peace. In this Mass I would like to thank — and you too, thank them with me — the detainees of the prison in Opera [Italy], for the gift of the hosts which they packaged themselves and which will be used in this celebration. Let us greet them with a round of applause from here, all together....

I affectionately greet all of you, pilgrims from Italy and other countries.

Now I invite everyone together to convey to God a prayer for the victims of the attacks that occurred in recent days in Indonesia and Burkina Faso. May the Lord welcome them in his house, and sustain the international community's efforts to build peace. Let us pray to Our Lady: Hail Mary...

I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*