

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, January 20th, 2019

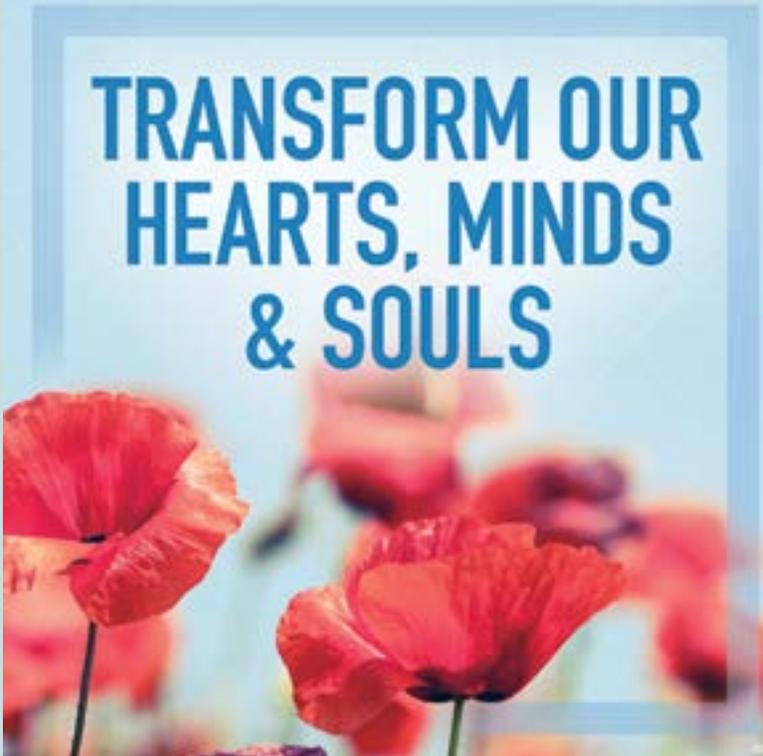
We Have Seen His Glory

Written by Br. Silas Henderson, S.D.S.

Isaiah 62:1-5

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

John 2:1-11



TRANSFORM OUR
HEARTS, MINDS
& SOULS

If you're anything like me, it seems like it's been months since we celebrated Christmas. The busy and rich holy days gave way to New Year's resolutions as we returned to work, school, and ministry. Even the memories of our recent celebrations of the Epiphany and Baptism of the Lord are quickly fading. And yet, on this Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Gospel story of the wedding at Cana forms the third part of a sort of Epiphany trilogy and carries the themes of these two Christmastide feasts into the green days of Ordinary Time: manifestation and transformation.

These three Epiphany events — the visit of the Magi, the baptism of Jesus by John, and the miracle at Cana — are, as Pope Francis has described them, "the three signs that the liturgy brings in these days in order to speak to us about the manifestation of God: God makes himself known." And, as we know, the story of the Magi coming from the East reminds us that the child born in Bethlehem was born for all peoples, and the baptism of Jesus is the revelation that he is the Father's "beloved Son."

So, then, what do we learn from the miracle at Cana? What truth is revealed in this Sunday's Gospel? To answer this question, we have to pull back the lens, as it were, to take in a broader view of salvation history.

Throughout the Old Testament, we read of how God continually called straying women and men back into right-relationship with Himself. The Hebrew Scriptures are filled with signs and stories that reveal God's covenant-love — His relationship — with His chosen people: the rainbow after the great flood (Gn 9:1-17), Abraham's star-filled sky (Gn 15), the giving of the Law to Moses (Ex 15 and 24), and the promises made to King David and his descendants (1 Sm 7:12-13). Each of these stories reminds us that while the people of Israel violated this relationship time and again, God's love and mercy remained constant. Even the first reading this Sunday reminds us of God's abiding and merciful love: *"As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so shall your God rejoice in you."* (Is 62:5)

But those signs and symbols of the Old Testament were only representations of God's love. On that first Christmas night, everything changed. In Jesus — who is the Word made flesh — God *"made his dwelling among us and we have seen his glory."*

(Jn 1:14) The miracle at Cana was the first time that Jesus manifested. Remember, this is an Epiphany — his own transforming power and his glory. This is why Adrian Nocent, OSB, could write these beautiful words, a celebrated commentary on the liturgical year:

“We were once water, now we are wine, and are judged worthy of the wedding feast . . . We are being invited, then, to meditate on this renewal of ourselves, of our institutions, and of everything around us, but we must bear in mind that the renewal will come in its fullness only at the wedding feast on the last day.”

Cana marked a beginning. In the transformation of the water into wine, we discover that Jesus wasn't simply another prophet or holy man. He was God's "beloved." He holds the power to transform — to recreate and renew — the elements of earth and, more importantly, the hearts, minds, and souls of his followers.

In the coming weeks of Ordinary Time, we will hear the stories of how this transforming and saving work that was begun in Cana changed the lives of Jesus' disciples. And we're invited to reflect on how that transforming power continues to shape us today.

Br. Silas Henderson, S.D.S.

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PRAYER

All-holy Father,
in your divine wisdom and love,
you chose that the Blessed Virgin Mary
should play her part
in the mysteries of our salvation;
grant that by heeding the words of Christ's Mother,
we may do what he commands
in the Gospel he has given.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.
— *A prayer in honor of Our Lady of Cana*
from the "Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Vol. 1"