

## Second Sunday After Epiphany

14 January 2018

*“But thou hast kept the good wine until now.” Jn. 2:9*

Dom Prosper Gueranger in his book, *The Liturgical Year Vol 3*, tells us of the mystery of today’s feast: “The third Mystery of the Epiphany shows us the completion of the merciful designs of God upon the world, at the same time that it manifests to us for the third time (the first time to the Shepherds and Magi at the stable and the second time to Jewish people at the Baptism of St. John the Baptist), the glory of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The star has led the soul to faith, the sanctified Waters of the Jordan have conferred purity upon her; the Marriage-Feast unites her to her God. We have been considering, during this Octave, the Bridegroom revealing himself to the Spouse; we have heard him calling her to come to him from the heights of Libanus; and now, after having enlightened and purified her, he invites her to the heavenly feast, where she is to receive the Wine of his divine love.

### The New Wine of Charity

“A Feast is prepared (cf. Jn. 2): it is a Marriage-Feast; and the Mother of Jesus is present at it, for it is just that, having co-operated in the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, she should take part in all that her Son does, and in all the favours he bestows on his elect. But, in the midst of the feast, the Wine fails. Wine is the symbol of Charity or Love, and Charity had failed on the earth; for the Gentiles had never tasted its sweetness; and as to the Synagogue, what had it produced but *wild grapes* (cf. Is. 5:2). The True Vine is our Jesus and he calls himself by that name (Jn. 15:1). He alone could give that *Wine which gladdeneth the heart of man* (cf. Ps. 53:15). He alone could give us that *Chalice which inebriated* (cf. Ps. 22:5), and of which the Royal Psalmist prophesied.

*“Do whatsoever he shall say to you.” Jn. 2:5*

“Mary said to Jesus: *They have no Wine.* It is the office of the Mother of God to tell him of the wants of men, for she is also their Mother. But Jesus answers her in words which are apparently harsh: *Woman! What is it to me and to thee? My hour is not yet come.*’ The meaning of these words is, that, in this great Mystery, he

was about to act, not as the Son of Mary, but as the Son of God. Later on, the hour will come when, dying upon the Cross, he will do a work, in the presence of his Mother, and he will do it as Man, that is, according to that human nature which he has received from her. Mary at once understands the words of her Son, and she says to the waiters of the Feast, what she is now ever saying to her children: *‘Do whatsoever he shall say to you.’*

### The New Wine of Christ

“Now, there were six large waterpots of stone there, and they were empty. The world was then in its Sixth Age, as St. Augustine and other Holy Doctors tell us. During these six ages, the earth had been awaiting its Saviour, who was to instruct and redeem it. Jesus commands these waterpots to be filled with water; and yet water does not suit the Feast of the Spouse. The figures and the prophecies of the ancient world were this water, and until the opening of the Seventh Age, when Christ, who is *the Vine*, was to be given to the world, no man had contracted an alliance with the Divine Word.

“But, when the Emmanuel came, he had but to say, *Now draw out*, and the waterpots were seen to be filled with the wine of the New covenant, *the Wine which had been kept to the end.* When he assumed our human nature—a nature weak and unstable as water—he effected a change in it; he raised it up even to himself, by *making us partakers of the divine nature* (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4); he gave us the power to love him, to be united to him, to form that one Body of which he is the Head, that Church of which he is the Spouse and which he loved from all eternity, and with such tender love, that he came down from heaven to celebrate his nuptials with her.

### Jesus Manifests His Glory as God

“St. Matthew, the Evangelist of the Humanity of our Lord, has received from the Holy Ghost the commission to announce to us the Mystery of Faith by the star; St. Luke the Evangelist of Jesus’ Priesthood, has been selected by the same Holy Spirit, to instruct us in the mystery of the Baptism in the Jordan; but the Mystery of the Marriage-Feast was to be revealed to us by the Evangelist John, the Beloved Disciple. He suggests to the Church the object of this third Mystery, by this expression, *‘This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and he MANIFESTED his glory.’* Jn.

2:11 At Bethlehem, the God of the Magi expressed the Divinity of the Babe; at the Jordan, the descent of the Holy Ghost and the voice of the Eternal Father proclaimed Jesus (known to the people as a carpenter of Nazareth) to be the Son of God; at Cana, it is Jesus himself that acts, and he acts as God, for, says St. Augustine, he who changed the water into wine in the waterpots could be no other than the same who, every year, works the same miracle in the vine. Hence it was that, from that day, as St. John tells us, *'his disciples believed in him'* (cf. Jn. 2:), and the Apostolic College began to be formed." Gueranger, p. 241-3

### The "good wine" of Christ and His Bride, the Church

The Lord delights in performing this miracle. God has saved the "good wine" for last: *"But thou hast kept the good wine until now."* Jn. 2:9 The new wine of Jesus is charity. St. Paul shows us the superabundant gifts of the Spirit which come in the New Testament with the charismatic gifts and the practice of fraternal charity. It is the new wine with the blessing of the Church on Holy Matrimony in which the love which husband and wife have for each other is similar to the love that Christ has for His Church: *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, cleansing her in the bath of water (Baptism) by means of the word; in order that he might present to himself the Church in all her glory, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish."* Eph. 5:25-7 St. Paul also speaks of this love which we need to have for one another in today's *Epistle to the Romans* (12: 6-16): *"Let love be without pretense. Hate what is evil, hold to what is good. Love one another with fraternal charity, anticipating one another with honour. Be patient in tribulation, persevering in prayer, Share the needs of the saints, practising hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Be of one mind toward one another...."* Rom 12: 9-16

### Divine Charity, Our Espousal with Christ

Dom Gueranger comments on the spiritual meaning of today's Gospel (Jn. 2: 1-11) of Jesus' miracle of changing water into wine: **"Thus divine Charity, which dwells in the Sacrament of Love (Holy Eucharist), is communicated to us; and**

that we might not be unworthy of the espousals with himself, to which he called us, he raises us up even to himself. Let us therefore, prepare our souls for this wonderful union, and, according to the advice of the Apostle, let us labour to present them to our Jesus with such purity as to resemble that *chaste Virgin*, who was *presented* to the spotless Lamb (cf. 2 Cor. 11:2 and Eph. 5: 27). Gueranger, p. 247. Jesus not only manifests Himself with the miracle of changing water into wine at Cana, but He shows how we are called to be His spouse in the Heavenly Marriage Feast.

### How to attend Holy Mass

**"The Holy Mass is a prayer itself, even the highest prayer that exists. It is the sacrifice, dedicated by our Redeemer at the Cross, and repeated every day on the altar. If you wish to hear Mass, as it should be heard, you must follow with eye, heart, and mouth all that happens at the altar. Further, you must pray with the Priest the holy words said by him in the Name of Christ and which Christ says by him. You have to associate your heart with the holy feelings which are contained in these words, and in this manner you ought to follow all that happens at the altar. When acting in this way, you have prayed Holy Mass."**

His Holiness, Pope St. Pius X