

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jan 7th 2017

Today's Epistle is a prayer for sinners, the Psalm is a song of praise, and the Gospel recounts the familiar story of the wedding at Cana.

The Psalm praises the Lord for support that God provides to his people. I see today's readings as lessons in a transformative trust in God. In the Gospel, Mary intercedes with Jesus in behalf of the wedding couple. The Gospel ends with a miracle serving as an impetus for the early disciples' belief. I do not see flashy miracles today; I do see what I would call mini-miracles, the products of acts of faith, which seem to accomplish the impossible. Although I have never been there, I have always been intrigued by the shrine at Lourdes. What I have heard from those who have made the pilgrimage is that it is not so much a place of physical healing. It seems to serve instead as an opportunity for spiritual healing and personal transformation.

I find interesting the parallels between a mainstream program for dealing with addiction and today's passage from John's letter. I have an uncle and a sister who both succumbed to alcoholism. More important is that I believe in changes in individuals resulting from turning their will over to a Higher Power. These are changes that I would not have imagined it could have been possible to witness. The Epistle recognizes human weakness. It offers an acknowledgment that we are not in control. (My uncle and sister both had problems admitting their powerlessness as isolated individuals.) It is through God's support that we are given freedom. "And we have this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, we know that what we have asked him for is ours." In addition, the Epistle has a call to the Johannine community (where appropriate) to support and intercede for those who have surrendered to weakness.

My career path has trained me to question and often to be cynical. The Gospel uses a miracle story to bolster faith, but I feel it is the little miracles, these 12 step miracles, that provide a sign of the positive influence of religious faith.

Depending on where you are situated in the world today is either the day after the Feast of the Epiphany or the eve of a Sunday celebration of this holyday. We pray for our epiphany, our moment of insight. Today I end with addressing God considering my hopes with regard to an active divine presence and care as well as my personal role.

Dear Lord,

This world can be frustrating and demanding.

Help me to recognize and accept Your saving grace.

Comfort me in my admission that I am not in control.

Help me to admit my failures and to trust in the Your protection.

Do not let me forget my community.

Remind me to support and intercede for those in need.

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