

Service for Week 13th -19th January

2025- By Chaplain Andy

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we were not there at the stable like the shepherds, we were not one of the twelve who you chose to be your apostles: we were not able to see you heal the sick.

Yet we can know you as much as any who were there, for you are with us now, with us always, here by our side. Loving Jesus, we thank you for the daily reality of your living presence.

Amen

Say to yourself- The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading

Jesus Changes Water to Wine

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he

told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God

Reflection

The miracles that Jesus performed as described in the gospels are difficult for some people to believe. That is because like the account in our reading of Jesus turning water to wine, they go against the laws of nature and the natural order of things.

We may think that it would useful if we could change water into wine, it would certainly save a lot of expense if you were organizing a big wedding, like the one in our reading. But we know that it would go against the laws of physics so we may think- did that really happen, and why?

For me the answer to this question is found in the last verse of our reading – ‘He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.’

Throughout the gospels there are accounts of how weak the disciples faith was at times. When the disciples were so afraid that they would be drowned when a violent storm brew up while out on the lake of Galilee we read in Mark's gospel - Jesus said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" And in Matthew's gospel Jesus says, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?".

We read that Jesus performed miracles of different types, such as controlling nature by calming a storm. By changing physical things like the wine in our reading into something else. But mainly by healing the sick and on occasion bringing back people who had died. In all these incidents in Jesus' life and ministry I believe that the main reason that Jesus did these things is because he held a deep love and compassion for the people he encountered.

One family that Jesus loved was Mary, her sister Martha and their brother Lazarus. When Lazarus was sick and died Mary said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." And we read - When Jesus saw her weeping, and those who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and

troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then they said, "See how he loved him!"

I am sure it was Jesus' deep love and compassion for people that made him use on occasion his godly power. But but the other reason for doing so was to convince the disciples through faith that he really was God in human form. This was essential in order that they would carry forward his teachings and accounts of his life after he had returned to God.

It is because of their faith that we have these accounts of Jesus' life in the gospels today over 2000 years later. The love and compassion that Jesus had and has for each of us is still as strong today as it was then. It is personal, a love which like Lazarus's family and the celebration of the family wedding in Cana brings us all into the family of God.

In John's gospel Jesus tells us "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. They will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." **Amen**

Closing prayer

Loving God, there is much still to learn and much that will be beyond me, but I have seen and heard enough to convince me of your love and forgiveness. **Amen**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett