

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

(Jn 2:1-11) (*Audio Year C Track 008*)

(*Poem* Vol. 1, pp. 280-5, Vol. 5, pp. 846, 865;

Gospel Vol. 1, pp. 333-8, Vol. 10, pp. 417, 440;

Notebooks '45, pp. 321-3)

(It is very early in Jesus' public life. The scene is a house in Cana, where a wedding is shortly to take place...)

Mary is most warmly welcomed, and escorted by an elderly man who appears to be the landlord. She climbs up the outside staircase and enters a large hall which seems to fill the whole of the house upstairs, or most of it...

The hall is now cleared of every object and decorated with green branches, mats and tables prepared with rich dishes.

Mary listens benignly to what they are telling Her, then She takes off Her mantle and kindly helps to finish laying the tables. She smiles, speaks very little and in a very low voice, listens a lot, and with so much patience.

A loud sound of musical instruments (not very harmonious) is heard coming from the road. They all rush out, with the exception of Mary. I see the bride come in, smartly dressed and happy, surrounded by relatives and friends. The bridegroom - who was the first to rush out and meet her - is now beside her...

I now see a village... And I see Jesus with John and another man, who I think is Judas Thaddeus, but I may be wrong... Jesus is wearing a white tunic and a dark blue mantle. When he hears the sound of the instruments, Jesus' companion questions a man about something and then tells Jesus. Then Jesus, smiling, says: "Let us go and make My Mother happy." And He starts walking across the fields towards the house, with His two companions...

When Jesus arrives, the same watchman as before, informs the others. The landlord - with his son (the bridegroom) and Mary - goes down to meet Him, and greets Him respectfully. He then greets the other two and so does the bridegroom. But what I like is the loving and respectful way in which Jesus and Mary exchange their greetings. There are no outpourings, but the words "Peace be with You" are pronounced with a look and a smile worth one hundred embraces and one hundred kisses. A kiss trembles on Mary's lips, but it is not given. She only lays Her little white hand on Jesus' shoulder, and lightly touches a curl of His long hair. The caress of a chaste lover.

Jesus climbs the staircase beside His Mother - followed by His disciples, the landlord and the groom - and enters the banquet hall, where the women start bustling about,

adding seats and plates for the three guests, who, apparently, were not expected. I would say that Jesus' coming was uncertain, and the arrival of His companions was completely unexpected.

I can distinctly hear the Master's full, virile, most sweet voice say on entering the hall: "May peace be in this house, and the blessing of God on you all." It is a greeting of majesty, addressed to all the people present. Jesus dominates everybody with His bearing and His height. He is a guest - and a casual one - but He seems to be the king of the banquet, more than the groom, more than the landlord. No matter how humble and obliging, He is the one who dominates.

Jesus sits at the central table with the bride and the bridegroom, their relatives and their most influential friends. The two disciples are also invited to sit at the same table, out of respect for Jesus.

Jesus' back is turned to the wall where the large jars and the dresser are. He therefore cannot see them, neither can He see the steward bustling about the dishes of roast meat, which are brought in through a little door near the dresser... Jesus is sitting near the landlord, in front of Mary, Whose place is near the bride.

The banquet starts. And I can assure you that they lack neither appetite nor thirst. The ones who eat and drink little are Jesus and His Mother. Mary speaks very little, and Jesus talks a little more. But although very moderate, He is neither sullen nor disdainful in the little He does say. He is kind, but not talkative. He answers when He is questioned. When they speak to Him, He takes an interest in the subject, he states His opinion, but then He concentrates on His thoughts, like one accustomed to meditation. He smiles, He never laughs. If He hears any inconsiderate joke, He pretends He has not heard. Mary is nourished by the contemplation of Her Jesus, and so is John, who is at the end of the table and hangs on His Master's lips.

Mary notices that the servants are talking in low voices to the steward, who looks very embarrassed. She understands what the cause of the unpleasant situation is. "Son", She whispers in a low voice, thus drawing Jesus' attention. "Son, they have no more wine."

"Woman, what is there still between Me and You?" Jesus, when saying these words, smiles even more gently, and Mary smiles too. They are like two people aware of some truth which is their joyful secret, and which is ignored by everyone else.

(Jesus explains the meaning of the sentence to Maria Valtorta...)

"That word "still", which is omitted by many translators, is the keyword of the sentence, and explains its true meaning.

I was the Son, submissive to My Mother, up to the moment when the will of My Father told Me that the hour had come when I was to be the Master. From the

moment My mission started, I was no longer the Son submissive to My Mother, but I was the Servant of God.

My moral ties with My Mother were broken. They had turned into higher bonds, all of a spiritual nature. I always called Mary, My Holy "Mother". Our love suffered no interruptions, neither did it even cool down, nay, it was never so perfect as when I was separated from Her as by a second birth, and She had given Me to the world - and for the world - as the Messiah and Evangeliser.

Her third sublime mystical maternity took place when She bore Me to the cross in the torture of Golgotha, and made Me the Redeemer of the world.

"What is there still between Me and You?" Before I was Yours, only Yours. You gave Me orders, and I obeyed You. I was "subject" to You. Now I belong to My mission.

Did I not say: "He, who lays his hand on the plough and looks back to bid farewell to those who are staying, is not fit for the Kingdom of God"? I had laid My hand on the plough: not to cut the ground with the ploughshare, but to open the hearts of men and sow there the word of God. I was to take My hand away from the plough: only when they would tear it away to nail it to the Cross; and to open with My torturing nail My Father's heart, out of which forgiveness for mankind was to flow.

That word "still", forgotten by most, meant this: "You were everything for Me, Mother, as long as I was only Jesus of Mary of Nazareth, and You are everything in My spirit; but since I became the expected Messiah, I belong to My Father. Wait for a little while, and once My mission is over, I will be, once again, entirely Yours;.. But now I belong to all these men. And I belong to the Father, Who sent Me to them".

That is the sense of that short but so full of meaning: "still".

[We return to the vision:]

Mary says to the servants: "Do what He will tell you." In the smiling eyes of Her Son, Mary has read His consent, veiled by the great teaching to all those "who are called".

And Jesus says to the servants: "Fill the jars with water."

I see the servants filling the jars with water brought from the well (I hear the pulley screeching as the dripping pail is pulled up and lowered down). I see the steward pour out some of the liquid with astonished eyes, then taste it with gestures of even greater astonishment, relish it, and speak to the landlord and the groom...

Mary looks at Her Son once again, and smiles. Then having received a smile from Him, She bows Her head, blushing slightly. She is happy.

A murmur spreads throughout the hall, they all turn their heads towards Jesus and Mary, some stand up to get a better view, some go near the jars. Then a moment's silence, which is immediately broken by an outburst of praise for Jesus.

He stands up, simply says: "Thank Mary" and withdraws from the banquet. His disciples follow Him. On the threshold He repeats: "May peace be in this house, and God's blessing on you" and He adds: "Goodbye, Mother."

The vision ends.

(Jesus says to Maria Valtorta:) "When I said to the disciples: "Let us go and make My Mother happy", I had given the sentence a deeper meaning than it seemed. I did not mean the happiness of seeing Me, but the joy of being the initiator of My miraculous activity, and the first benefiter of mankind.

Always remember that. My first miracle happened because of Mary. The very first one. It is a symbol that Mary is the key to miracles. I never refuse My Mother anything, and because of Her prayer I bring forward also the time of grace. I know My Mother, the second in goodness after God. I know that to grant you a grace is to make Her happy, because She is All Love. That is why I said, knowing Her: "Let us go and make Her happy".

Besides, I wanted to make Her power known to the world, together with Mine. Since She was destined to be joined to Me in the flesh, it was fair She should be joined to Me in the power that is shown to the world. Because we were one flesh: I in Her, She around Me, like the petals of a lily round its scented lively pistil. And She was united to Me in sorrow: because we were both on the cross, I with My body, She with Her soul, as a lily is scented because of its corolla, and because of the essence extracted from it.

I say to you what I said to the guests: "Thank Mary. It is through Her that you had with you: the Master of the miracle; and you have My graces, particularly those of forgiveness".

Rest in peace. We are with you."

(Jesus says:) "Marriage is a grave and holy act. And to prove that, I took part at a wedding and I worked My first miracle there. But woe if it degenerates into lust and whim. Let marriage, the natural contract between man and woman, be elevated to a spiritual contract, by which the souls of two people - who love each other - swear to serve the Lord in reciprocal love, offered to the Lord in obedience to His order of procreation; to give children to the Lord..."

(Jesus links two important miracles performed during His public life...)

"Holy Communion is a miracle of love that I worked for you. But at the summit of my thought of love, there, shining, was the thought of infinite love: of being able to live with My Mother and make Her live with Me, until we should be reunited in Heaven. I

worked the first miracle for the joy of My Mother, at Cana in Galilee. The last miracle, or rather, the last miracles, for the consolation of Mary, in Jerusalem. These were the Eucharist, and the veil of the veronica. The latter, to give a drop of honey to the bitterness of the Desolate Mother. The former, to prevent Her from feeling that Jesus was no longer on the Earth..."

(Jesus tells Maria Valtorta that there was more to meditate upon, to help our understanding of the wedding feast at Cana. Verse by verse, He explains some further meanings:)

"'Three days later there was a banquet.' Three days: three periods before the feast of joy: The first, from the creation of the world until the punishment of the world; the second, from the flood until the death of Moses; the third, from Joshua - a figure of Myself - until my coming. And three more periods, or three days: the three years of my preaching before the Paschal feast. And as happens with a nuptial banquet - where the closer the moment for the feast comes, the more preparations for it intensify - so it was with my banquet of love..."

"'And the Mother of Jesus was there.' The Mother! Can the Mother be lacking if the new man is to be born? Can Eve not be there if, from now on, she must be 'Life' where there was Death? And can the Woman be lacking as the hour approaches when the Serpent will have oppressed the head of man, and limited his freedom of action? She cannot. And the Mother of the living - the sinless Eve; the Woman of the 'Hail Mary' and the Fiat; the Woman with the powerful heel; the Co-Redeemer; - She was present at the banquet with which Humanity's betrothal to Grace began.

"'When the wine ran out.' The guests [of My time on Earth] would not have delighted in the presence of Jesus. Oh, when I came for my banquet of Grace, I truly found that the wine soon ran out. There was too little, it was quickly consumed, and men fell into sadness. Because I disappointed their hopes of becoming inebriated with the human juices of power and revenge.

" 'Stone vessels prepared for the purifications of the Jews'. [These are] what I had found on starting my mission. Just that, for material purifications. Hearts - after centuries and centuries of impure assimilation of Wisdom - had turned into stone vessels..."

"'Fill the vessels with water.' Oh, how much living water I poured into the Jews' hearts of stone, so that they would at least have a minimum to be useful for something! But they did not change, and almost a majority of them rejected the water, remaining empty, hard, dark, and surly.

"'And now draw it out.' That's it. In the hearts where the water was received, it turned into select wine, to the point where the steward said, 'Everyone serves the best wine at the beginning and then the worst, whereas you have reserved the best for the

end.' I indeed reserved the best for the end - I, the Bridegroom at the great banquet. At the Last Supper, I, the Bridegroom, with my final act as the Master, did not turn water into wine, but wine into my Blood for a new transformation which would help you, O men, to be happy with my happiness, which is holy and eternal...

"The vessels at the Cana banquet were quickly emptied, leaving those invited to the wedding inebriated. My Eucharist has been filling the chalices and ciboriums of the whole earth for centuries. And until the end of the ages: the hungry, the exhausted, the thirsty, the weary, the afflicted; the dying and those barely beginning to exercise reason; the pure and the penitent, the sick and the healthy, priests and lay people; and men of every race and condition - on the mountaintops and on the plains, among the polar snows and at the equator, and on water and on land - [All these] will come to drink, eat, be nourished, and be saved.

And [they will] live: on my Blood and on my Flesh; on this Wine given at the end of the Banquet; and on the threshold of the Redemption - So that it would be: the perpetual Banquet of the Bridegroom for those loving Him; and an ongoing Redemption of your weakness and falls.

"The wedding at Cana [was] the transformation of water into wine. The Paschal Supper [is] the transubstantiation of bread and wine into my Body and my Blood. The former, to mark the beginning of my mission of transforming the Jews - in that ancient time - into disciples of Christ; the latter, to mark the beginning of the transubstantiation of men into children of God through grace returning to live in them... This, my little John, is one of the applications - and it is the highest one - of the miracle at the wedding in Cana..."