

On the Gospel of the Marriage Feast at Cana.

27th January 1889

My dear daughters,

I don't think I have ever spoken to you before about the Gospel of the Marriage Feast at Cana. This Gospel is generally read on my feast when I would not normally hold a Chapter. There are however many things to be said about it, in one way or another. Today I want to speak to you about it from one point of view which concerns me a lot: the Blessed Virgin asking on behalf of humanity, for the things which she herself needs. Undoubtedly it was the marriage of a poor couple which the Blessed Virgin and Our Lord attended; the fact that the wine ran out would seem to prove it. They had planned beforehand but in spite of this the wine ran out in the middle of the meal.

In that country the meal consisted of a very few things; imagine in what poverty and simplicity it was taken. Even though it is called *a great supper* we should not think that there were many special dishes as we would have today. The meal would have consisted of several kinds of meat, grilled or roasted, with olives and wine; perhaps, as at the Last Supper, some bitter roots, some locally grown fruit, olives, figs, oranges; these are probably what went into these feasts for engagements and marriages, *a great supper*. If the wine is lacking, there is very little else. It is very embarrassing.

For these poor people, it is a great disgrace, a great difficulty. The Blessed Virgin takes pity on them. It is her role of mercy which is emphasised throughout this Gospel. She has pity on their need, on their poverty, and so she says to Our Lord, "Son, they have no more wine." There is a much loftier meaning to this; the changing of water into wine was like a prophesy of trans-substantiation, of the marvellous changing of wine into the Blood of Jesus Christ which would take place one day. How great is the poverty of the human race when it is deprived of the intimate and interior visit of Our Lord Jesus Christ! What is the situation of a nation which does not receive Communion? I am sure that any country is poor when the Precious Blood has not touched souls there. — I am not talking about earthly goods, it can be rich with these - but that country is miserable, it has no gifts, no graces, no strength, nor the virtues which come from the communication of the Blood of Our Lord to the human race.

There is a second interpretation of the word of the Blessed Virgin and it is in this sense that she said to her Son, "They have no more wine. I am praying for them, give them your life." For certainly she knew what it would cost him for this divine life to open its heart to them, but even so she says "Give them your life" and because *you have come that they might have life and have it in abundance* give it to these people who are abandoned, without a shepherd, without grace and without light.

There is still another meaning, and this one will concern us much more directly. All of us receive Our Lord, we receive bread changed into His Body, and wine changed into His Blood; but, when the Blessed Virgin says "*Son, they have no more wine*" does that not mean, where is the generosity, the enthusiasm of which wine is the symbol - one talks about generous wine; it is wine that strengthens the heart, which can even give artificial energy, if it is drunk to excess; but drunk soberly and in moderation it strengthens the heart and the disposition..

And so it is for the soul, the same effects from wine must be produced in her from the wine which has become the Blood of Jesus Christ; that is to say generosity, enthusiasm; it is something which runs, which flies, which wants to give all to Jesus Christ, to sacrifice everything for love of Him. How often has the Blessed Virgin, when looking at our souls, been able to say "They have no wine" They are your betrothed, and yet where is their enthusiasm, their love, their generosity in sacrifice? They really need you to come to their aid.

And so I would ask you, my daughters, when you meditate on this Gospel, to repeat after the Blessed Virgin: "Lord, I have no more wine; I lack the wine of love. the wine of enthusiasm, the wine of life, the wine of strength, of generosity, of courage which would result in virtues being acquired. The Blessed Virgin asks this of you for me; listen to her saying 'Son, she has no wine'". But in your distress, listen to the advice which the Blessed Virgin gives you "Do

everything He tells you." It is the remedy in all situations: listen to Our Lord in the depths of your soul, and then do everything He tells you regarding humility, poverty, sacrifice, obedience, regarding continual and heartfelt prayer.

With all this you are sure to receive the sacred wine of communion in a good state; you can be sure that the wine of enthusiasm will be found in the depths of your soul; sure of obtaining for those you love that they too, in their turn, will be revitalised, sanctified by this Precious Blood. Unfortunately, this bread and this wine, which God has given to us all through an altogether other miracle than the changing of water into wine, does not penetrate into all our families. This we have especially to wish for those who are dear to us: that they may have the happiness of receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ during their life time and especially at the hour of their death. And so, my Sisters, these are the things for which we can ask either for ourselves or for others..., uniting ourselves to the prayer of the Blessed Virgin.

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