

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

We have probably all known generous people in the course of our lives. Generosity can take many and varied forms. Some people are generous in sharing their material resources; they give generously to those who have less than themselves. Others may be generous in sharing their time with others; they are always ready to stop and to listen. Others again may have a generous spirit; they are slow to hold grudges against those who have hurt them; they know how to forgive.

The readings of today suggest that generous people reveal God to us in a special way, because God is generous. Jesus reveals the generosity of God in the context of the marriage feast at Cana. The mother of Jesus draws his attention to an embarrassing lack that needs to be addressed. “They have no wine,” she says.

Jesus goes on to address her petition, providing not merely enough wine to meet the need but more than enough, an absolute abundance. Furthermore, he provided not just an abundance of the medium quality wine that had run out, but an abundance of excellent wine, so much so that the steward says to the bridegroom in amazement, “You have kept the best wine till now.”

The evangelist clearly wants to say that the God whom Jesus reveals to us is in no sense a miserly God. Jesus reveals a God whose generosity is, to put it mildly, outlandish. In his opening chapter, John says that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, and from this fullness we have all received. The married couple at Cana who experienced the Lord’s generosity represent us all who are invited to receive from the Lord’s fullness.

The gospel also suggests that the Lord’s generosity towards us needs to be tapped by us. It does not just pour over us haphazardly, as it were. If the married couple at the wedding feast of Cana experienced the Lord’s generosity, it was because a number of the guests at the wedding feast made the Lord’s generosity available to them. The most significant person in this regard was Mary. She brought their need to her Son and she instructed the servants to do whatever her Son told them to do. They, in turn, proceeded to do just that, carrying out the Lord’s commands to the letter. It was through the Lord’s mother and those servants that the Lord’s generosity became a tangible reality for that married couple.

We are each meant to tap the Lord's generosity and be a part of mediating that generosity to others. God desires to include us in his goodness and his plans. The profile of the mother of Jesus suggests one way we can do this. She interceded for the married couple with her Son. We can all intercede for each other with the Lord. Intercessory prayer has been a central part of the life of the Church since its foundation. Interceding with the Lord for each other is one of the ways we release the Lord's generosity into the Church and the world.

The servants in the gospel story also show us how to tap the Lord's generosity. When the mother of Jesus said to them, 'Do whatever he tells you', they did precisely that. What she said to them, she says to all of us, "Do whatever he tells you." In listening to the Lord's word and in allowing that word to shape our lives, as Mary did, we too will become channels of the Lord's generosity. Mary and those servants cooperated with him to make his generosity tangible and, thereby, lead others to faith. He needs all of us here just as much, for the same reason.