

Think back to some of the weddings you have been to recently. What was your connection with the bride or groom or parents? A wedding is a social event and when we go, it's because we are connected to the couple or family. This was similar in Jesus' time. Weddings were big social gatherings, they would have lasted a couple day, often with the whole village of the bride and groom being invited. So why were Jesus, his mother and the disciples at the wedding? Was it a relative? Was the bride from Nazareth, Jesus home town, that was just over the hill to the southwest of Cana? Or was Jesus on the way traveling through?

In the story right before this wedding at Cana, the story we read last week, Jesus was in Bethany, by Jerusalem in the region of Judea and it says that Jesus is headed for Galilee. Just to remind you, they are walking. Nazareth is a place where they would have had places to stay and they are headed for Capernaum. What's on the way? Cana was on the way and as they walked, they came upon a wedding party. They had left Nazareth 2 hours before and they had 4 hours left to walk. In this situation for many of us, a meal, a glass or two of wine and some music would seem like an unnecessary delay.

Life has in-between stages— pauses along the way we believe we should be going. The pauses are often not intentional on our part, we would much rather like to just get there. It is also true that there is great power in stopping, in letting ideas mature gradually, and in being lead. Teilhard de Chardin wrote about this. Teilhard (1881-1955) was a Jesuit priest and thinker. He wrote the prayer or reflection titled *Trust in the Work of the Spirit*. As I read it I invite you to be supported by your chair and to intentional about breathing:

Above all, trust in the slow work of the Spirit. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.

We should like to skip the intermediate stages. We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability-and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you, your ideas mature gradually – let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste.

Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow.

Who can say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be? Give yourself the benefit of believing that the Spirit is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete...

Jesus, his mother and the disciples are on the way and come upon this big social gathering. It's something so ordinary they might have been tempted to just get to where they were going. But they stop. And sometime later the wine runs out. This would be as socially awkward then as today. You can imagine the shame that would accompany such a happening. No matter if because of money or miscalculation people would have talked. Either way the extraordinary happens.

God reveals God's self—Epiphany. This is Jesus first public act in Gospel of John. John doesn't call these miracles but signs

pointing to who Jesus is. What does it reveal about God? Six jar, 20-30 gal a piece of the best wine, when you least expect it. It is abundance (180 gal, 700 bottles). You want to know what grace upon grace looks like? You want to know what it tastes like? This is grace you can experience. Something extraordinary comes into the ordinary.

Life is changed when Jesus show up. You would expect the hosts to be taking care of this, but a guest at the meal assuming this role. The kitchen help are the ones most in the know not the folks at the head table. The ordinary doesn't look the same when Jesus shows up.

This is Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. A time when we remember and celebrate the life of an American patriot and hero. A man that gave his life to end suffering and injustice. A man that dreamed—that dreamed of grace upon grace. A man that was constantly on the way and incomplete. But also filled by the love of an overly abundant God, a grace heaped upon grace God. Since MLK's death the United States has made many strides in assuring justice for all, but we are on the way. MLK weekend is a time for us to pause. Be enveloped by the Amazing Grace that MLK preached about, that fueled him in his life and now knows fully in life with God. Now is a time to trust in the Spirit. To trust the Spirit is working in you and me. Giving us guidance and inspiration and endurance to keep running the race, to keep working for justice. The moral arc of the universe is long but it bends toward justice. As I read again de Chardin's prayer mediate on God's over abundant grace and love that we see overflowing at the wedding in Cana and mediate one God's love of justice for all. To what is the Spirit calling you?

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