

mother of thy holy Creator without ceasing to be a virgin, and heard from Gabriel that greeting: "Hail." Have pity on us sinners.

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made know by the message of an angel may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen

"The End" Notes

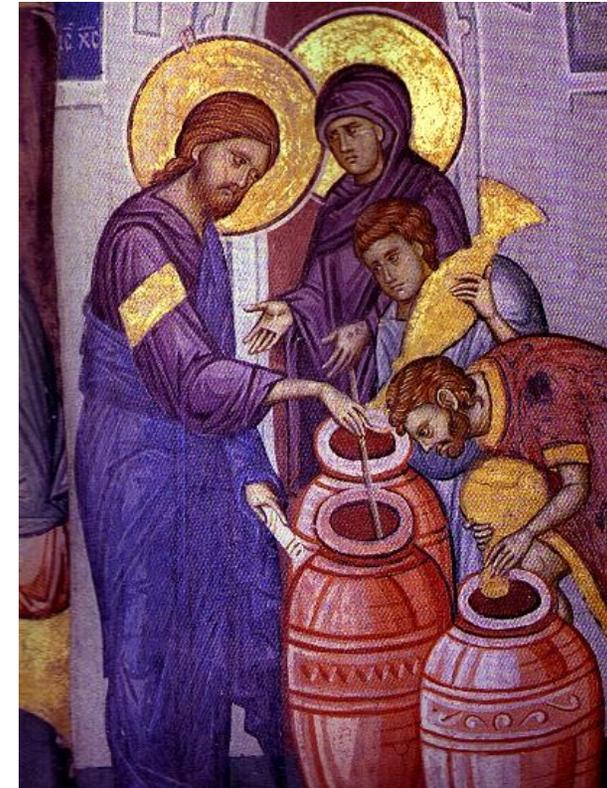
- [1] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1613
- [2] John 2:1-2
- [3] Fr. Leonard Goffine; *The Church's Year*
- [4] Matthew 18:20
- [5] From a Letter to the Ephesians by Saint Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
- [6] Matthew 24:38
- [7] Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B.; *The Liturgical Year; Christmas – Book II*
- [8] Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B.; *The Liturgical Year; Christmas – Book II*
- [9] Psalm 23:5-6
- [10] Anima Christi Prayer
- [11] John 15:13
- [12] Matthew 20:22
- [13] *The Order of the Mass; Communion Rite*
- [14] *The Order of the Mass; Eucharistic Prayer*
- [15] John 15
- [16] Luke 1:78-79
- [17] Galatians 4:4
- [18] Mark 2:22
- [19] Ezekiel 36:25-27
- [20] Luke 23:46
- [21] Catechism of the Catholic Church, Glossary 888
- [22] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 352
- [23] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 352
- [24] Jn. 21:25
- [25] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pgs. 352-353
- [26] CCC 548
- [27] CCC 549

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Link to Liturgy



The Wedding at Cana New Vine; New Wine

Lessons and Discussions

Page 5 – Marriage: Who's invited?

"Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding"

Page 7 – New Vine, New Wine

"They have no wine."

Page 11 – Miracles

"Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee"

Communion Antiphon

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred.

Dicit Dominus: Implete hydrias

Jn 2: 8, 9, and 10-11

VI

T HE Lord said: * Fill the jars with water and bring some to the master of the feast. When the master of the feast tasted the water, which had now become wine, he declared to the bridegroom: You have kept the good wine until now. This was the first sign which Jesus accomplished before his disciples.

Alternate options:

Hail to the Lord's Anointed
 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise
 The Church's One Foundation
 Your Love is Extravagant
 How He Loves Us

Collect - Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen

Passion of Christ, strengthen me
 O good Jesus, hear me
 Within Thy wounds hide me
 Suffer me not to be separated from Thee
 From the malicious enemy defend me
 In the hour of my death call me
 And bid me come unto Thee
 That I may praise Thee with Thy saints
 and with Thy angels
 Forever and ever
 Amen

Marian Antiphon - Divine Office (Sunday Compline)

V.

A L-ma * Red-emptó-ris Ma-ter, quæ pérv-i-a cæ-li Por-ta manes, et stella ma-ris, succú-re cadé-nti, Sú-rge-re qui cu-rat, pópulo: Tu quæ genu-ísti, Na-tú-ra mi-rá-nte, tu-um sanctum Ge-ni-tó-rem, Virgo pri-us ac posté-ri us, Gabri-élis ab o-re Sumens il-lud Ave, pec-ca-tó-rum mi-se-ré-re.

Alma Redemptoris Mater (English Translation)

Loving mother of the Redeemer, open door to heaven and star of the sea, come quickly to the aid of thy people, fallen indeed but striving to stand again. To nature's astonishment thou wert the

the fourth case because he hid himself from them.” (ibid.) The two main cases that appear of Divine Power: John 2; Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19 – The casting out of the vendors
Luke 4 – The episode of the escape from the hostile crowd at Nazareth.

Cases of Resurrection

Matthew 9; Mark 5; Luke 8 – Raising of the daughter of Jairus
Luke 7 – Raising of the son of the widow of Naim
John 11 – Raising of Lazarus

Why does Jesus perform miracles? “The signs worked by Jesus attest that the father has sent him. They invite belief in him. To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. Miracles strengthen faith in the one who does his father’s works; they bear witness that he is the son of God. But his miracles can also be occasions for ‘offense’; they are not intended to satisfy people’s curiosity or desire for magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons.”[26]

[\[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson – Magic or Miracle\]](#)

Why do miracles matter? Miracles show us that God is the supreme authority or everything. “By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hunger, injustice, illness, and death, Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless he did not come to abolish all evils here below, but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God’s sons and causes all forms of human bondage.”[27] Jesus has brought and established His kingdom on earth through the Catholic Church. He gives us the ability to be freed from sin by the miracles of the Sacraments. We await His glorious return where He will reign forever.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Anima Christi

The Anima Christi is a prayer from around the 14th century. It is still widely used after receiving the body and blood of Our Lord, Jesus Christ in Holy Communion.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Blood of Christ, inebriate me
Water from Christ's side, wash me

Almighty ever-living God, who governs all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Gospel Reading – John 2:1-11 – Daily Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
- Glory to you, O Lord

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from — although the servers who had drawn the water knew —, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.” Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings

From a Letter to the Ephesians by Saint Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
The harmony of unity

It is right for you to give glory in every way to Jesus Christ who has given glory to you; you must be made holy in all things by being united in perfect obedience, in submission to the bishop

and the presbyters.

I am not giving you orders as if I were a person of importance. Even if I am a prisoner for the name of Christ, I am not yet made perfect in Jesus Christ. I am now beginning to be a disciple and I am speaking to you as my fellow disciple. It is you who should be strengthening me by your faith, your encouragement, your patience, your serenity. But since love will not allow me to be silent about you, I am taking the opportunity to urge you to be united in conformity with the mind of God. For Jesus Christ, our life, without whom we cannot live, is the mind of the Father, just as the bishops, appointed over the whole earth, are in conformity with the mind of Jesus Christ.

It is fitting, therefore, that you should be in agreement with the mind of the bishop as in fact you are. Your excellent presbyters, who are a credit to God, are as suited to the bishop as strings to a harp. So in your harmony of mind and heart the song you sing is Jesus Christ. Every one of you should form a choir, so that, in harmony of sound through harmony of hearts, and in unity taking the note from God, you may sing with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father. If you do this, he will listen to you and see from your good works that you are members of his Son. It is then an advantage to you to live in perfect unity, so that at all times you may share in God.

If in a short space of time I have become so close a friend of your bishop—in a friendship not based on nature but on spiritual grounds—how much more blessed do I judge you to be, for you are as united with him as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ to the Father, so that all things are in harmony through unity. Let no one make any mistake: unless a person is within the sanctuary, he is deprived of God's bread. For if the prayer of one or two has such power, how much more has the prayer of the bishop and the whole Church.

Responsory - Ephesians 4:1, 3-4

I implore you in the Lord, lead a life worthy of the vocation to which you have been called.
– Be careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, and there is but one hope given to you by your calling.

Healing Miracles

There are several unnamed cases that are not spoken in great detail, but here are several.(cf. *ibid.*)
John 4 – Healing of the nobleman's son
Matthew 8; Mark 1; Luke 4 – Cure of the mother-in-law of Peter
Matthew 8; Mark 1; Luke 5 – Cleansing of the leper
Matthew 9; Mark 2; Luke 5 – Healing of the paralytic
John 5 – Healing of the sick man at Bethesda
Matthew 12; Mark 3; Luke 6 – Restoring of the man with the withered hand
Matthew 8; Luke 7 – Healing of the centurion's servant
Matthew 12; Luke 11 – Healing of one blind and dumb
Matthew 9; Mark 5; Luke 8 – Healing of the woman with an issue of blood
Matthew 9 – Opening of the eyes of two blind men
Matthew 9 – Cure of the dumb man
Mark 7 – Healing of the deaf and dumb man
Mark 8 – Opening the eyes of one blind at Bethsaida
Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9 – Healing the lunatic child
John 9 – Opening the eyes of one born blind
Luke 13 – Restoring the woman with a spirit of infirmity
Luke 14 – Healing of the man with the dropsy
Luke 17 – Cleansing of the ten lepers
Matthew 20; Mark 10; Luke 18 – Opening the eyes of the blind man near Jericho
Luke 22 – Healing of Malchus's ear

Healing of Demoniacs

Mark 1; Luke 4 – Demoniac at Capernaum
Matthew 12; Luke 11 – Deaf and dumb demoniac
Matthew 8; Mark 5; Luke 8 – Gerasene demoniacs
Matthew 9 – Dumb demoniac
Matthew 15; Mark 7 – Daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman
Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9 – Lunatic child
Luke 13 – Woman with the spirit of infirmity

Victories over Hostile Wills

“Under this heading Catholic scholars admit a greater or smaller number of miracles; it is not clear in certain cases whether the incidents in which Our Lord wielded extraordinary power over his enemies were cases of supernatural intervention of Divine Power or of His human will over that of other men. Such cases are mentioned in John (7:30 and 44; 8:20 and 59), where Jews failed to arrest him ‘because His hour was not yet come,’ or, in

Union team. The U.S. team was not even supposed to be competitive against the Soviets, and yet they were able to defeat them in an amazing game. Near the end of the game the announcer, Al Michaels, gave an infamous remark “Do you believe in Miracles? Yes!”

Who does miracles? Ultimately, miracles are only produced by God. God can work through others to show miracles as He did with the Apostles while on earth, and as He does with the saints and Mary. He allows a miracle to work through someone, “...to witness to some truth or testify to someone’s sanctity.”[23]

How many miracles did Jesus do? Ultimately we do not know the exact number while He was on earth because as it says at the end of John’s gospel, “There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world could contain the books that would be written.”[24] Not to mention all the other miracles He has performed while in Heaven. However here is a list of the miracles of Christ in Scripture:

Activity – Miracles of Christ[25]

The miracles of Jesus can be broken down into five classes: nature miracles; healing miracles; deliverance of demoniacs; victories over hostile wills; cases of resurrection. If in a group setting, break the group into five small groups. Give each group a category “natural miracles” but do not tell them what category they have. Write the categories on the board and then have each group figure out which category they fit in. Another option would be to give each person a verse. Set up categories in different areas of the room. Once each person has read their verse, they then move to the category their miracle fits in and share with others in that group.

Nature Miracles

John 2 – Changing of the water into wine at Cana
 Luke 5 – First miraculous draught of fishes
 Matthew 8; Mark 4; Luke 8 – Calming of the tempest (Storm)
 Matthew 14; Mark 6; John 6 – First multiplication of loaves
 Matthew 14; Mark 6; John 6 – Jesus walking on the water
 Matthew 15; Mark 8 – Second multiplication of loaves
 Matthew 17 – Stater in the fish’s mouth
 Matthew 21; Mark 11 – Cursing of the fig tree
 John 21 – Second miraculous draught of fishes

– Be careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Marriage: Who’s invited? – Lesson and Discussion

“Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding”

“On the threshold of his public life Jesus performs his first sign – at his mother’s request – during a wedding feast. The Church attaches great importance to Jesus’ presence at the wedding at Cana. She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ’s presence.”[1]

Who was invited to the wedding at Cana? The Gospel says, “There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.”[2] What an honor for this couple to have Mary, Jesus, and the disciples at their wedding. We too have this same honor of inviting our Blessed Mother, our Lord, and the Church (disciples) to our wedding. Jesus presence at our wedding ensures Christ’s presence in our marriage.

Why were Christ and His mother present at this marriage?

“In order to honor this humble and God-fearing couple who, with faithful hearts, had invited Him and His mother to their wedding; to give us an example of humility; to assist them in their poverty, and save their good name by changing water into wine; to reveal His dignity as the Messiah to His disciples by this miracle; and to sanctify by His presence the marriages that are contracted in the spirit of the Church. Alas! How few marriages of our time could Jesus honor with His presence, because He is invited neither by fervent prayer, nor by the chaste life of the couple: He is excluded rather, by the frequent immorality of the married couple and their guests.”[3]

Jesus tells us, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”[4] We need to ask ourselves: in what name and/or for what purpose do we enter into our marriage? **What is the intent of the couple? Is Christ and His Church invited by the couple?** If the couple, their witnesses, and friends and family are not gathered together in the name of Christ, then Christ will not be present in that wedding nor in that marriage. Christ and His Church are one and the same. This is why marriage within the Church, and the couple gathering together in His Holy Name, ensures the presence of

Christ not only in the wedding, but in the marriage. There is no mistake that the couple who gives their life to each other has much power, but how much more power does the love have when the couple unites that gift of self with the prayers and sanctity of the whole Church. “Let no one make any mistake: unless a person is within the sanctuary, he is deprived of God’s bread. For if the prayer of one or two has such power, how much more has the prayer of the bishop and the whole Church.”[5] Weddings outside the sanctuary are deprived of God’s bread (the Eucharist). They are also deprived of the prayers of the bishop and the whole Church. Weddings within the sanctuary include the Eucharist. Marriages within the Church invite Christ (the Eucharist), and the disciples, represented by the approval of the bishop, as witnessed by his servant the priest or deacon. Marriage within the Church also invites the Mother of God, for she is found within the Church, and many couples give her great honor and devotion through the practice of presenting a bouquet of roses during the Rite of Marriage.

[See also the Link to Liturgy Marriage Series]

The wedding at Cana along with the adoration of the Magi and the baptism of the Lord are considered the Epiphany or manifestation of the glory of God. It is through these three events that Jesus manifests His divinity. It is also at these events that Christ makes holy or elevates what is natural and necessary for man. Man needs purification, cleansing. Prior to the life of Jesus, the Word made Flesh, there was ritual cleansing. Saint John the Baptist was already baptizing people for the forgiveness of sins. However, the waters were not yet sanctified and elevated to a Sacrament. This water, and all waters for that matter, are sanctified and elevated only when the precious body of our Lord touches the waters of the Jordan. Prior to the life of Jesus, the Word made Flesh, there was marriage for “they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day that Noah entered the ark.”[6] It is only when our Lord is invited into a marriage that the natural ritual or ceremony of marriage as an institution is sanctified and elevated to a sacrament.

What is so important about the change from a natural ritual to a supernatural Sacrament? First, the ritual or ceremony is just natural, but a sacrament is super natural. Things that are only natural tend to decay and/or corruption. The body in its natural state will corrupt. When the natural is elevated to the supernatural it becomes eternal. The body in its supernatural

hearts. I will put my spirit within you and make you live by my statutes, careful to observe my decrees.”[19] This spirit cannot be placed within us without charity, for in the greatest act of charity, the Crucifixion, Jesus says, “Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit.”[20] It is because Christ commends His spirit, that the spirit is placed within us, for this is how the branches remain one with the vine. Each night at Compline (Night Prayer) the Church remembers with fond appreciation this great love in the responsory, “Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit. Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit. You have redeemed us, Lord God of truth. I commend my spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.”

Miracles – Lesson and Discussion

“Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee”

Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana as we read in the gospel reading. However, many people today do not fully understand what miracles are and why Jesus performed them.

What is a miracle? “A sign or wonder, such as a healing or the control of nature, which can only be attributed to divine power.”[21]

Besides a typical miracle, there are also “Miracle of Grace”, which is, “A sudden and unexpected conversion from ignorance to faith, from doubt to certainty, from sinfulness to holiness, It is not due to ordinary causes but to God’s particular special and unmerited grace. It is an effect of divine intervention beyond the ordinary working of Providence.”[22]

TV SHOW – How I Met Your Mother – Miracle – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:36

<http://youtu.be/wxhUV8YuO1w>

Marshal tries to prove there are such things as miracles. While his scenario is not a miracle in the true sense, He is at least open to the fact that there could be a divine power.

SPORTS – Miracle on Ice – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:25

<http://youtu.be/8gfD134ED54>

One of the greatest upsets ever in any sport happened at the Winter Olympics when the U.S. Hockey team defeated the Soviet

ACTIVITY – Read Isaiah 5 and Psalm 80

Jesus teaches that there is “no greater love” in the Last Supper discourse, the same discourse where He says, “I am the true vine” and “I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.”[15] Jesus is the true vine that restores the house of Israel. The old vine spoke of in Isaiah 5 bore forth wide grapes, and was overgrown with thorns and briars, but this vine will be restored. Through Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of Psalm 80 is realized. “Turn again, Lord of hosts; look down from heaven and see; attend to this vine...Lord of hosts, restore us; let your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.” It is in the context of the Psalm that Saint Zachariah can sing, “In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.”[16] Jesus is the vine, the Church is the vineyard. The vine had become bad and therefore the wine had run out.

This is why Mary can say to Jesus, “They have no wine.” Humanity had no wine, because they had no vine. Jesus is the new vine that gives us the “new wine” This new wine, like the wine at the wedding at Cana is superior to the old and this is why the server says, “you have kept the good wine until now”. The good wine was kept back until “when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”[17] It makes sense that “the vine” would be born of a woman, and “the wine” would be requested by the same woman.

This new wine cannot be put in old wineskins, for Jesus says, “no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is put into fresh wineskins.”[18] If the “new wine”, which is the charity of Jesus, is to be poured into us there must be a change in the vessel. This is why the feast of the baptism of the Lord precedes the Wedding at Cana. We need the repentance and cleansing of baptism, to prepare the way for the charity of new wine which will be poured into us. At baptism we are “filled to the brim” with water, a water that will be changed into the wine of Christ’s love. Ezekiel prophesies this when he says, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural

state is the resurrected body, which will not corrupt. Natural relationships, without the presence of Christ as their center, tend toward corruption. Relationships that center on Christ become supernatural and full of grace.

MOVIE - four Christmases..marriage –POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:24

<http://youtu.be/-cGuwJfFEjs>

Marriage in this movie is said to be a “time bomb waiting to explode”. In fact if you want to ruin a relationship, get married. There is no intention of a total gift of self and definitely no intention of openness to life which are the ends of marriage. In truth if a couple does not intend to give them self completely and intend on openness to life, then not only will they not wish to be married, but they will not be capable of marriage.

TV - Seinfeld: Kramer on Marriage - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:23

http://youtu.be/suAhGfVr_4U

Mother Teresa said that charity means sacrifice. Marriage is a commitment to lay down your life for that of a friend – to sacrifice. There is “something more” in a relationship and that “something more” is a life of charity, a life of sacrifice for the good of the other.

We can see in the two Pop Culture Connections what the world thinks of the institution of marriage. **Why do they think so poorly of marriage?** They think poorly of marriage because they are only thinking of the institution in the natural sense, manmade and without Christ present. They are not thinking of the institution in the supernatural sense, as a Sacrament instituted by Christ and full of grace.

New Vine, New Wine – Lesson and Discussion

“They have no wine.”

The wedding at Cana is the third event of the Epiphany following the adoration of the Magi, and the Baptism of the Lord. “The star has led the soul to faith; the sanctified Waters of the Jordan have conferred purity upon her; the Marriage-Feast unites her to her God...the Bridegroom revealing himself to the Spouse...after having enlightened and purified her, he invites her to the heavenly feast, where she is to receive the Wine of his divine love.”[7]

What does the wine symbolize? “Wine is the symbol of Charity

or Love, and Charity had failed on the earth; for the Gentiles had never tasted its sweetness...The True Vine is our Jesus, and he calls himself by that name. He alone could give that Wine which gladdeneth the heart of man (Psalm 104:15); he alone could give us that Chalice which inebriateth, (Psalm 23:5), and of which the Royal Psalmist prophesied.”[8]

CHANT - COMMUNION Holy Thursday - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 1:23

<http://youtu.be/cDmhQT39HBI>

Psalm 23 is read in a Eucharistic sense. Jesus in the Eucharist is our Good Shepherd, our Host, and our King. We are His sheep: we are His guests. “You have set a table before me as my enemies watch; You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.”[9]

Another translation for Psalm 23:5 says, “My chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly it is” This is why we pray in the Anima Christi prayer “Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from Christ's side, wash me...”[10] To inebriate is to intoxicate or to exhilarate. It is the Blood of Christ that intoxicates us with the love of God. At the wedding at Cana, Our Lord performs His first miracle of changing water into wine. At the Last Supper, Our Lord performs one of His last miracles, while on earth, changing wine into blood. He wishes to give us the greatest charity (wine) living out the words He spoke, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”[11] The wine of charity is therefore changed into the blood of Sacrifice. This charity gushes forth from His Sacred Heart to the whole world. It is in the Sacrifice of the Christ, that not only is the charity of wine, turned into the sacrifice of blood, but Jesus Christ who was present at the Wedding Feast is not presented to the world on the Cross, drawing all to Himself and to the Wedding Feast of Heaven. It was at first that He was invited to a feast, now it is He, our Host, that invites us to the feast.

ACTIVITY – Read Psalm 22 and 23

What does Psalm 22 remind us of in the Life of Christ? What does Psalm 23 remind us of in the Life of Christ, especially in regard to the Sacraments? It is by no mistake that Psalm 23, we speak of Christ as the Good Shepherd and the Host is preceded by Psalm 22 which Jesus prays on the Cross, “My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?” God can never be with

sin. Jesus took on all of humanities sin, and thus felt the pain of humanity separated from God the Father. Without Psalm 22 (the Cross), there would not be the “green pastures”, “safe waters”, “right path”, or table set before us in which our “cup overflows”. Thankfully we know that Jesus by submitting to His Father’s will, conquers sin and death thus enabling us to have no fear as Psalm 23 says.

MUSIC – Your Love – Nicki Minaj - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 3:25

<http://youtu.be/S2R6jEBv8aw>

We speak a lot of “love”, but is the message of love sung in this song the love that causes our “cup to overflow” or is it a false love that leaves us empty? Nicki Minaj sings of “your love”; what is it that is backing the “love”? When we sing, “you love” in regards to the love of Christ, we have plenty that is backing the “love”. Although the love that Nicki Minaj sings about is shallow, it still leans toward true love, commitment, and fulfillment. At the end of the song she speaks of a certificate that changes her name, this of course is a reference to marriage in which a true lasting love is found. Marriage itself between man and woman is not an end in and of itself, for man and woman is only a sign of the deepest love, that of Christ and His Bride, the Church.

Mystically and miraculously Psalm 22 and 23 are united in the Mass. For it is at the holy sacrifice of the Mass that we are at the heavenly wedding feast. Jesus, our good shepherd leads us by the “safe waters” of baptism, but then as our host, He turns that water into wine as our “cup overflows”. He moves us from the safety of baptism, into the intoxicating intimacy of the holy Eucharist. We sing in the offertory antiphon at today’s mass, “You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.”

Jesus asks the apostles Saints James and John, “Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?”[12] At each Mass, we are “called to the supper of the Lamb”[13] and invited to drink the cup that Jesus drank as we receive His body and drink His blood. At mass the priest prays, “he took this precious chalice in his holy and venerable hands, and once more giving you thanks, he said the blessing and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying: take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. do this in memory of me.”[14]