

KEEPING THE BEST FOR THE LAST
John 2:1-12
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 17, 2016, 5:00 PM Mass
St. Faustina Catholic Church, Fulshear, Texas
(Deacon Ernie and his wife Paz are celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary this year.)

In one newspaper cartoon, two small boys were sitting on the ground each eating a piece of cake. One gives the other his advice: "Always eat the icing first, Joey. Then, whatever happens, you already had the best part." That, of course, is not unusual way for children to eat cake. The sad thing is that some people never got beyond their childhood tendency. They live their lives the same way children eat cake---the good part first and then after that a lesser quality. The concept is very much a part of our current youth culture. Almost everyone dreads the ageing process; so we postpone it and disguise it by every possible means---facelift, hair dye, wrinkle cream, you name it. The best years of life, some people think, lies somewhere between mid-20's and mid-40's. Those years represent the icing on the cake, and once they are gone, they had already the best part. After that both the quantity and quality of enjoyment diminish.

Today's gospel reading is a subtle reminder against this erroneous philosophy. Here's briefly what it says: There was a wedding at Cana. Mary, Jesus and his disciples were invited and went. In the course of festivities, the host ran out of wine. Then Jesus, through his mother's request, saved the host from embarrassment by performing his first miracle. He turned water into wine. When the headwaiter tasted the new wine without knowing where it came from, he was astonished and said to the host: *"Everyone serves good wine first...and then an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now."*

Some people live the best years of life in pleasure but after that it's all down-hill. *"They serve the good wine first and then a lesser vintage."* But when we live with Jesus and for Jesus, when we put into practice those things that he lived and taught, then this life, your life and mine, is not a down-hill proposition. We don't start out celebrating with the best and end up existing on the worst. With Jesus and for Jesus anywhere along this life's journey, we can say with confidence what that great English poet, Robert Browning said: "The best is yet to be."

Most of us, if not all, would like to live a life when the best is yet to be. We want our lives to constantly grow in fullness and meaning and quality so that the best is still waiting for us at the last. How could it be? Well, build our lives on those things that get better and richer with age. Love is that kind of thing---a good kind of wine. Take care of it and it never runs out. Have you ever watched a man and a woman who have been in love for fifty years? Half a century, they have shared their lives. They have been thoughtful and kind and giving despite thorns along the way. Now at the last they are more in love than they were at the first; more in love than the young can ever be. Friendship is also that way. So are traits of character such as patience, honesty, generosity and kindness. Those things like love never get old. And love like wine just gets richer and better with the passing of years. So go ahead and smile at the little boys eating the icing off their cake, but learn a lesson from the wedding feast at Cana---invite Christ and Mother Mary into your life as you grow old with me. Then when people taste the wine of your life, they will somehow know that you have kept the best for the last.