

**The Still Point**  
**A Time of Meditation and Reflection**  
**The Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

... At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance...

T.S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton*

Peace on each one who comes in need;  
**Peace on each one who comes in joy.**  
Peace on each one who offers prayers;  
**Peace on each one who offers song.**  
Peace of the Maker, Peace of the Son,  
**Peace of the Spirit, the Triune One.**

**Opening Prayer**

Spirit of energy, Spirit of change, in whose power Jesus is anointed to be the hope of the nations: pour yourself also upon us, without reserve or distinction, that we may have confidence and strength to plant your justice on the earth, through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**The Gospel**

*John 2: 1-11*

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

**Poem: "A Wedding Toast"**

*By Richard Wilbur b. 1921*

St. John tells how, at Cana's wedding feast,  
The water-pots poured wine in such amount  
That by his sober count  
There were a hundred gallons at the least.

It made no earthly sense, unless to show  
How whatsoever love elects to bless  
Brimms to a sweet excess  
That can without depletion overflow.

Which is to say that what love sees is true;  
That this world's fullness is not made but found.  
Life hungers to abound  
And pour its plenty out for such as you.

Now, if your loves will lend an ear to mine,  
I toast you both, good son and dear new daughter.  
May you not lack for water,  
And may that water smack of Cana's wine.

**Meditation**

The setting of a wedding feast for Jesus's first miracle may seem unusual. After all, a wedding is a private event, usually focused on family members and close friends. But it's also a festive celebration of love, and the experience of a wedding can often take us out of ordinary time and day-to-day concerns. Jesus would later use the imagery of a wedding banquet to teach about the Kingdom of God.

In the poem by Richard Wilbur, the poet wonders about the enormous volume of wine resulting from this miracle. (The gospel writer was very specific about this, as well as about the quality of the wine!) It makes no sense, the poet says, except to show that when love blesses something or someone, it does so in abundance. A personal toast for the speaker's son and new daughter, the poem reaches a wider audience by reminding us of both the joy we experience at a wedding and the overflowing fullness we may encounter in life through love.

**Questions for Reflection**

What do you find in the story of the wedding at Cana that is new, inspiring, or insightful? What is revealed about Jesus in this story?

When in your life have you encountered love in overflowing abundance, brimming "to sweet excess?" How did you (or do you) respond to this experience?

## **Prayers**

We bring before God someone whom we have met or remembered today

We bring to God someone who is hurting tonight and needs our prayer

We bring to God a troubled situation in our world

We bring to God, silently, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust

We bring ourselves to God that we might grow in generosity of spirit, clarity of mind, and warmth of affection

We offer our thanks to God for the blessings in our lives

We name before God those who have died.

Gracious God, you hear all our prayers: those we speak aloud, those we hold in our hearts, and those prayers for which we have no words. Hear the prayers of your people, and grant them as may be best for us, for the sake of your holy name. **Amen.**

Accept our thanks for all you have done, O God. Our hands were empty, and you filled them.

May Christ's holy, healing, enabling Spirit be with us every step of the way, and be our guide as our road changes and turns, and the blessing of God our Creator, Redeemer and Giver of life be among us now and remain with us forever. **Amen.**

***Poem and Reflections this month offered by: Frank Nowell***