

+ J. M. J.

When Bishop Imesch shared stories of rectory life a couple of weeks ago some people were curious about what goes on now. When Javier was over here during his Christmas break one thing we talked about was idioms, those phrases that when literally translated into a different language make no sense. For example we might use the expression hold your horses. Well, in Peru they would say stop the car. Fr. Mark and I explained the play on words of what happens when you assume, which does not work when translated into Spanish.

In the Gospel Mary points out to Jesus that **“They have no wine.”** Jesus responds with an Aramaic expression. When translated into Greek and then translated into English we get **“Women, how does your concern affect me?”** Actually the idiom which has been lost is akin to someone dear to us asking us to do something we do not want, but out of respect agreeing to the request of the one we love. Notice Mary’s next line is **“Do whatever he tells you.”**

Why is Jesus reluctant to come to the rescue of this young couple? As the Gospel unfolds he will do far greater miracles. By agreeing to Mary’s request Jesus will perform his first miracle. This then begins Jesus’ public ministry, a ministry that leads to his passion and death. Because Jesus has a human nature his human will shuns suffering and death as our human will avoids these things. We see a similar sentiment when Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane **“Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done.”** Of course Jesus conforms his human will to his divine will.

It is very interesting to consider Mary’s faith. After living with her Son for thirty years she surely knows what she is asking. We at our parish celebrate Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows. When I came here I was surprised that the middle or fourth stained glass window was of Jesus departing Mary to begin his public ministry. That is an event that is familiar or will be familiar to each person with children. In Mary’s case her giving up her child is a giving up her little boy to be sacrificed, suffer, and die so that all men and

women may be saved. What is remarkable is that in this instance she speeds along the events of salvation history out of love of this couple on their wedding. Meditating on this event, Cana, gives us insight into the faith of the Blessed Mother.

In the second reading St. Paul urges us on to use the gifts of the Spirit that we have been given. For Mary the Holy Spirit gave her the unique gift of being the Mother of God and all the accompanying graces she needed to strengthen the faith of the disciples and intercede for the whole world both in her earthly lifetime and now in heaven. **The expression of wisdom, the expression of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, mighty deeds, prophecy, discernment of spirits, varieties of tongues, interpretation of tongues.** These gifts weren't only given to the Corinthians. The Holy Spirit bestows these gifts in varying degrees to each of us here at Our Lady of Sorrows. For our part we pray and ask to know what gifts we have been given and then we pray for the strength to play our role in the Church because the gifts of the Spirit are to be used on behalf others. If we don't think we have these gifts or we have not been using them it is an invitation to ask God for spiritual insight or the courage to do so.

And how are we to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to build up the Church? We only need consider all the problems of the world. We are the ones who are to help our brothers and sisters in Haiti. We consider that tomorrow is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and we realize it is we who are to eliminate racism. This being the week of Christian Unity, it is we who are to use our gifts so that we may soon be one body of Christ. On Friday we remember the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade. We are the ones who are to end abortion. Through the person of Jesus Christ God does marry humankind. So now God, Father, Son, and Spirit, acts in the world through our hands, speaks through our lips, and accomplishes what needs to be accomplished through us.

To be sure, living the gifts of the Spirit will cost us just as it cost Mary, just as it cost Jesus. We then respond as Jesus responded to his mother. God I am reluctant, but I will do your will. This morning let us

ask God and meditate on the spiritual and also material gifts we have been given, then knowing our gifts
let us continue Jesus' earthly ministry through ourselves.

May God bless you.