

SUNDAY PLUS

Create peace

Jesus the peacemaker



By Sr Janet Fearnis FMDM

It was a potential family row. In catering for the wedding breakfast, allowance was made for unexpected guests. "Everybody" was welcome in accordance with the unwritten rules of hospitality: a wedding in the time of Jesus was an expensive business. As anticipated, some female family members arrived early to help with cooking for

the immediate and extended family, friends and acquaintances and "others" who would need to be fed. It's easy to imagine a hot, tired Mary, slaving over a fire and cooking pot, brushing her hair back in disbelief as she saw, not only Jesus, but a group of his hot, tired and thirsty fishermen friends appear for the wedding – and the food! The wine was already in embarrassingly short

supply, so Mary was possibly not thrilled to see Jesus. Her words, "They have no wine", might have implied, "and you haven't helped matters!" Jesus' reply, "What is that to me?" sounds almost churlish.

What were Mary's thoughts as she told the servants to obey any instructions Jesus might give them? She couldn't have expected her son to turn water into wine, but she might have hoped Jesus and the disciples would find some

money to buy more wine from a nearby vendor.

The wedding at Cana was Jesus' first miracle. It saved newly-weds and their families from an embarrassing start to a marriage and its celebration – but it also quite possibly saved Mary from the awkwardness of apologising on behalf of Jesus and his disciples. Cana was the first recorded incident of Jesus the peacemaker.

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God in the home

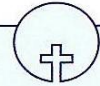
By Pope Francis

I wish to underline how important it is for families to ask themselves often if they live based on love, for love and in love. In practice, this means giving oneself, forgiving, not losing patience, anticipating the other, respecting. How much better family life would be if every day we lived according to the words, "please", "thank you" and "I'm sorry". Every day we have the experience of fragility and weakness, and therefore we all, families and pastors, are in need of renewed humility that forms the desire to form ourselves, to educate and be educated, to help and be helped, to accompany, discern and integrate all men of good will. I dream of an outbound Church, not a self-referential one, a Church that does not pass by far from man's wounds, a merciful Church that proclaims the heart of the revelation of God as love, which is mercy. It is this very mercy that makes us new in love; and we know how much Christian families are a place of mercy and witnesses of mercy.

Letter announcing the Ninth World Meeting of Families in Dublin, 21-26 August 201

Feast of the week

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



The week of the 18th to the 25th of January is dedicated specifically to this — to ask God for the gift of unity to overcome the scandal of division among believers in Jesus. After the Last Supper, he prayed for his own, "that they may all be one". This was his prayer before the Passion; we could call it his spiritual testament...

Unity can be achieved only as a fruit of prayer. Diplomatic efforts and academic dialogue are not enough. Jesus knew this and opened the way for us by praying. Our

prayer for unity is thus a humble but trusting participation in the prayer of the Lord, who promised that any prayer said in his name would be heard by the Father.

At this point, we can ask ourselves: "Do I pray for unity?". It is Jesus' will but, if we inspect the intentions for which we pray, we will probably realise that we have prayed little, perhaps never, for Christian unity. And yet, the world's faith depends on it; in fact, the Lord asked for unity among us "so that the world might believe"... Therefore, may prayer be the starting point to help Jesus achieve his dream: that they all may be one.

Pope Francis

"My hope is that peace may reign in the hearts of men and women and in families, in places of work and of recreation, in communities and in nations. In families, at work, in nations: peace, peace. Now is the time to think that life today is organized around war, and enmities, by many things that destroy. We want peace. And this is a gift."

Pope Francis

Today: Isaiah 62:1-5 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 John 2:1-11	Monday: 1 Samuel 15:16-23 Mark 2:18-22	Tuesday: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 Mark 2:23-28	Wednesday: 1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51 Mark 3:1-6	Thursday: 1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7 Mark 3:7-12	Friday: 1 Samuel 24:3-21 Mark 3:13-19	Saturday: 2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 17, 19, 23-27 Mark 3:20-21	Next Sunday: Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10 1 Corinthians 12:12-30 Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
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