

HOMILY

Father Larry Lynn

First Reading: 1 John 5: 14-21
Psalm 149
Gospel: John 2: 1-12

The Wedding Feast at Cana, a true celebration of life. The wedding being the bringing together of a man and a woman to continue the human race. Each time a couple marries, we celebrate with great joy – family, friends, acquaintances, co-workers – everyone loves a wedding. Everyone wants to celebrate the possibility of new life. Fundamentally, at a primordial level, a wedding lifts up our hope. Our hope in the human race, our hope in God. We don't necessarily think of it in those terms. No one consciously thinks, "Peggy Sue and Billy Bob are gettin hitched, there's hope for the human race!" But deep down, that's what it's about – hope.

And hope is essential to existence. Without hope, we have nothing. We can't have faith without hope. We can't have love without hope. Hope is essential to the human race. Which is why Jesus and his mother and some friends were at the wedding in Cana. They were celebrating the hope of new life.

But there was a social disaster about to take place. The hosts of the wedding had made a mistake, a miscalculation,

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whatever it was, it was going to destroy the benefits of the wedding. It was going to cause embarrassment and shame on the couple and the family. It was going to create dissension and suspicion and blame and anxiety and condemnation and rifts in the families. Bad blood that would go down through, perhaps generations. A disaster! If they only hadn't run out of wine!

Fortunately, even though he didn't think so, Jesus' time had come and his mother knew it. What better time and place to launch the public ministry of the Messiah, the Son of Man, that he would bring hope to this world.

As we surveil the social landscape in our world today, we notice a decidedly diminished number of weddings. There are many reasons we could point to and say, "That's why this is so!" In general, for young people today, there's a lack of the ability to commit to something so profound as marriage. I suppose you could say, now that Christendom is dead, there is a generalized lack of hope in this world. As birth rates go lower and lower, we can sense that hope is ebbing away. We are living in a world that is rapidly losing hope. The intelligentsia are too smart to have children. Do you know how difficult it is to raise a child?



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When a world begins to lose hope, they devise all kinds of methods to eliminate pain and suffering. They invent all kinds of methods of eliminating the possibility of having to raise a child – except for a few “wanted” children. When we lose hope we devise ways of eliminating suffering, ways that require actual killing of people that are suffering.

Brothers and sisters, in a world that is losing hope, you are the last line of defense against the elements of despair and the culture of death. You are the light that shines in the darkness of what is sometimes a very sad world. You carry the light of Christ in you. Shine that light everywhere you go. Watch the scourge of abortion and euthanasia wither under the intense light that your commitment to life and hope and love brings to bear in this world. The task may seem daunting but your perseverance is having a great effect. Hope is returning.

And to really make great strides in this battle, we are called to imitate a man who was born in Québec, was orphaned early, baptized the day he was born because they feared he wouldn't survive, was small in stature and sickly. Although he had a great desire to become a priest, the ecclesial authorities didn't have confidence that he was intellectually astute enough to be a priest. He was rejected



and eventually accepted as a brother in the Congregation of Holy Cross. As he himself said, “When I first arrived at the college, they showed me the door and I remained there for forty years.” He was after all. A simple porter, answering the door.

I'm speaking of course about Frere André now known as Saint André Bessette. When I say we are called to imitate him, I mean we must imitate his utter humility because humility is the foundation of love.

His complete emptying of himself is what allowed the Holy Spirit to work through him. His profound belief that

St. Joseph would intercede to help relieve suffering led to many miracle healings. He knew the weight of others' suffering; their burdens became his burdens and he suffered under the weight of their suffering. This is the imitation of Christ. The only way to relieve suffering is to take on the suffering of others, to live with compassion – compassion – to suffer with – That is what Christ did and that is what St. André did.

This is the true way; the only way we can confront the overwhelming forces of the culture that kills for convenience. This is the way we bring light into the darkness and defeat the evil one, and bring souls to Christ.

