



From the Lecturer's Desk

The Gospel reading on Jan 17 [Second Sunday in Ordinary Time] was the Wedding Feast at Cana [John 2:1-11]. If there was a subtitle for the reading, it might be: "Who is in Control".

During Jesus' time, a wedding required gathering all the relatives and friends of both families for a banquet followed by several days of an extended reception.

At Cana, as the wine began to run out, we see the mother-son dynamic play out. We have court-side seats as Christ has to decide "Who is in control". He faces the situation not as "Son of God" but as "Son of Man" – this is a human decision. Does he retain control or surrender it to another? This is exactly the cross roads we reach many times in our lives.

Mary plays her "mom" card. She didn't ask or demand; simply told him the problem – which we know in mom-speak means "fix it". It would seem that Mary is in control of the situation. Christ, on the other hand, tries to assert His control – "Woman, why do you involve me?" It's a very human response. He is trying to keep control the situation; He wants his public ministry to unfold under his terms; his timetable. Mary is more practical; He can save the bride and groom great embarrassment. She presents him the better choice. Mary is confident that her son will recognize the lessons of home and faith and see that the better choice requires that he set aside his own plans and preferences. That confidence is obvious in her instructions [do whatever he tells you] to the servants. Control of the situation hangs in the balance, then Jesus tells the servants to draw water – game, set, and match for Mary.

On our journey too it's a good idea to ask "Who's in Control".

Part of the human condition is the desire to be in control of our lives. We strive for that control at work. We try to establish and assert that control with our children while our children are trying to establish control in their lives. Remember raising teenagers?

Marriage problems can sometimes be attributed to a battle for control by one spouse over the other.

In the Gospel, Jesus was at a tipping point when Mary told the servants "do whatever he tells you". It's a truly dramatic and human moment. We have many, many of these moments in our lives. When you face a critical tipping point, you need to ask "Who is in Control"?