

The Woman: Take-Home 8

Session 8: Cana

What We Found

The guesses opened, and the study's first great question resolved: Jesus calls his mother 'Woman' because John's Genesis-shaped Gospel ('In the beginning,' the counted days, the third-day wedding) presents her as the woman of Genesis 3:15, set in enmity with the serpent, mother of the conquering seed; and by tying her request to 'my hour,' Jesus links her, from his first sign, to the Cross where he will say the word again. One 'Woman' text still remains, and it stays sealed a little longer.

The queen mother's office finally worked as designed: where Bathsheba carried a corrupt request a shrewd king refused, Mary noticed a need no one voiced, stated it without dictating ('They have no wine'), trusted through an answer that sounded like refusal, and pointed everyone away from herself: 'Do whatever he tells you' (John 2:5), her last recorded words in Scripture.

The hundred-and-twenty-plus gallons, somewhere between 120 and 180, are the prophets uncorked: 'the mountains shall drip sweet wine' (Amos 9:13); 'a feast of wine on the lees... he will swallow up death for ever' (Isaiah 25:6–8). The first sign announces the messianic wedding feast, and it began at his mother's word.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. AUGUSTINE

Augustine teaches, in substance, that Jesus' answer at Cana distinguishes his two births rather than repudiating his mother: the sign flows from the divinity he did not receive from her; the hour of the Cross belongs to the humanity he did.

Tractates on the Gospel of John, on John 2 (summary)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

St. Bernard teaches, in substance, that God willed grace to reach us through Mary as through an aqueduct: not the source, but a channel the Source freely built.

De aquaeductu (summary)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

St. John Paul II teaches, in substance, that at Cana Mary places herself between her Son and human need, presenting not demands but the fact of it; her intercession never points anywhere but at him.

Redemptoris Mater 21–22 (summary)

Live It This Week

- Each day, bring to Christ one need you noticed that nobody voiced.
- Pray 'Do whatever he tells you' before each significant decision this week, and pause long enough for it to be dangerous.
- Write on the back of this sheet: what my guess got wrong, and what that taught me about reading Scripture.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'"

John 2:5 (RSV2CE)

Before next session: Read Matthew 2:13–23.

Catechism references: CCC 2618; 1613