

Below you will find homily notes appropriate for a reflection on the Haiti earthquake for Sunday, January 17, 2010. The handouts include a prayer and intercession that can be used in liturgy or any other gathering.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
January 17, 2010

Isaiah 62: 1 – 5; Ps 96: 1 – 2, 2 – 3, 7 – 8, 9 – 10; 1 Corinthians 12: 4 – 11; John 2: 1 – 11

Reliance on the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a part of Catholic life. Today's Gospel supports this belief in Mary. Even though Jesus tells his mother, "My hour has not yet come," (2: 4) he does respond to her intervention for the young couple. He performs his first miracle to help the newly married couple there in Cana.

The Gospel of John has seven significant miracles of Jesus. The author of the Fourth Gospel refers to Christ's miracles as "signs." "Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee." (2: 11) These seven signs throughout the Gospel are intended to point the reader to a deeper understanding of Jesus, his ministry and, in this case, to the role of Mary.

Jesus calls Mary "woman." This is not disrespectful on the part of her Son, but is symbolic. Genesis 3: 15 speaks of a "woman" and her offspring defeating Satan. Christians see Mary as that "woman." When Jesus has his final encounter with Satan at his crucifixion, Mary is present and is again called "woman." "Woman, behold your son." (John 19: 26) Mary is with her Son as the words of Genesis are being fulfilled. She is also being asked to have concern for the beloved disciple, who represents all the followers of Jesus down through the ages. It is not surprising, therefore to read in the Acts of the Apostles, "All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers." (1: 14)

Another lesson taught by the miracle at Cana is that Mary is concerned about all the needs of her children. Every baptized person is a brother or sister of Jesus and, therefore, a child of Mary. The problem at Cana was a minor one as problems go. "They have no wine." (2: 3) Unfortunately there are many more serious problems in the world that need Mary's help and our concern. Our thoughts and prayers go especially to our brothers and sisters in Haiti. They have experienced yet another natural disaster of enormous proportions. We recall that in 2008 they suffered the effects of four major hurricanes Today we are called to show our solidarity with our neighbors by prayer and good works including financial assistance.

God of all creation, as we weep with our family in Haiti,
console us.

In this time of crisis, open our eyes to look beyond the disaster
to see Christ in our brothers and sisters in Haiti, as Christ sees
us.

Be with all creation; strengthen us in solidarity with those
living and working in Haiti. All creation returns to you in
mourning and your grace guides our efforts to feed the
hungry, shelter the homeless, comfort the grieving and stand
for justice.

With your mercy, sustain us at this time as we continue to
work for peace and justice.

Amen.

General Intercessions:

For our Brothers and Sisters in Haiti Affected by the Earthquake

For the people of Haiti, that they may be comforted in their time of suffering. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord Hear Our Prayer

For the families of those missing, may God's healing presence comfort them in this time of uncertainty. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord Hear Our Prayer

For those providing relief, that God may give them the strength and courage to assist those who are most in need. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord Hear Our Prayer

For those who have died, that they may rest in the eternal peace of God. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord Hear Our Prayer