

## PREPARING AT HOME

January 14-20, 2019

*Focus reading:* John 2:1–11 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=413269637>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Isaiah 62:1–5; Psalm 36:5–10; 1 Corinthians 12:1–11

*Theme:* Witnessing God’s New Way in the World

John writes his gospel to bring people to belief in Jesus as the Christ, the one promised and sent by God, the one who is the very presence of God in our midst. John calls the miracles “signs,” for their purpose is to point to Jesus’ identity. This week we read John’s account of the first miracle or “sign” of Jesus’ public ministry and find that Jesus’ identity is at the heart of the story. Jesus is with family and friends at a wedding in Cana. When the host runs out of wine, Jesus’ mother brings it to Jesus’ attention. If this is the first of Jesus’ public miracles, what makes her turn to Jesus in the host’s hour of need? What does she expect Jesus to do? What makes her ignore Jesus’ statement that he isn’t ready for this? Mary enlists the servants to follow Jesus’ instructions, even before he has agreed to do anything! Mary has no question about Jesus’ identity or his power. Like so many mothers who see things in their children that others have yet to notice, she encourages her son to own his identity. When he does, he not only turns water into wine, he begins a new way of life as a teacher and healer. Perhaps even Jesus needed a nudge to step into the new thing that God was doing in and through him. As a result, many others will see in him what Mary saw first.

### SIGNS OF GOD’S LOVE

John called the miracles “signs.” Jesus turned water into the very best wine as a sign of God’s generous love. Do you think everyone at the wedding party knew what Jesus had done? Draw pictures of signs of God’s love that you have seen. Look for signs of God’s love this week. Sometimes they are there, but we don’t notice them.

### ENCOURAGERS

Jesus’ mother encouraged him to help, even though he didn’t feel that he was ready. Who has encouraged you to try something new? Did you feel that you were ready? How did it turn out? Thank those who encourage you to do new things. You might want to make thank you cards for them. Is there someone you could encourage?

### PRAYER

Loving God,  
We give thanks  
for those who encourage us  
to be the people you have created us to be.  
Help us to encourage others to use their gifts  
to do your work in the world.  
Amen.

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