

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Middle School · Parent Edition

For the parent: Read each part aloud and work through the questions together. Your answers are printed in blue italics, so no preparation is needed. Your child uses the Student Edition.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

Most collects follow a five-part pattern: the **address** (the One to whom we pray), the **reason** (what God has done or promised), the **petition** (what we ask), the **purpose** (what we hope will result), and the **ending** (the closing that names the Trinity).

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. Mark each part of the collect. Which part is missing?

Answer: Address: "Almighty and everlasting God." Reason: "who governs all things in heaven and on earth." Petition: "mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days." Ending: "through Jesus Christ..." The purpose is missing.

2. How does the reason, that God governs all things, give confidence to the petition?

Answer: The One who rules everything can answer any prayer. Nothing we bring Him lies outside His rule.

3. What kind of "peace" does the collect ask for?

Answer: Peace with God through Christ, and quiet trust in His rule through all the ups and downs of life.

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

John 2:1-11

1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. **3** When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." **4** And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." **5** His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. **7** Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. **8** And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. **9** When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom **10** and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." **11** This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

1. Jesus says, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come" (v. 4). Was He being rude?

Answer: No. "Woman" was a respectful address; He uses it again from the cross (John 19:26). He is saying that He acts on His Father's timing, and His "hour" points to the cross.

2. How did Mary respond, and what does her answer show?

Answer: "Do whatever he tells you" (v. 5). She trusted Him without being told yes.

3. Jesus used jars meant for "the Jewish rites of purification" (v. 6). Why is that fitting?

Answer: *The old washing rites are filled with something new. Jesus brings the cleansing and joy those rites pointed toward.*

4. Six jars of twenty or thirty gallons is well over a hundred gallons of wine. What does that amount say about Jesus?

Answer: *He gives with overflowing generosity. The abundance is a sign that God's promised kingdom has come.*

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

1. Find at least two places where the collect's words appear in the Gospel. Explain each one.

Answer: *"Governs all things in heaven and on earth" matches water becoming wine at His word (v. 9). "Hear the prayers of Your people" matches Mary's "They have no wine" (v. 3). "Grant us Your peace" matches a feast rescued, with the good wine kept until now (v. 10). Any two, well explained, are enough.*

2. Today's Old Testament reading promises, "The mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it" (Amos 9:13). How does Cana show that promise coming true?

Answer: *The abundant wine is a sign that the promised days of God's kingdom have arrived in Jesus.*

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Sixth Commandment. You shall not commit adultery. **What does this mean?** We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

Cross-reference. "'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." (Ephesians 5:31-32)

1. Why does it matter that Jesus' first sign was at a wedding?

Answer: *It honors marriage, which God created, and it points to Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church.*

2. Luther says to lead "a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do." How does that apply to someone your age now?

Answer: *In our speech, in what we watch and read, in respect for others and our own bodies, and in preparing for a future marriage.*

3. Ephesians says marriage "refers to Christ and the church." How does Cana show Christ as the Bridegroom?

Answer: *He provides for the feast and gives the best wine. He will host the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

Parent note: the question they may ask. "Did Jesus approve of drinking wine?" Scripture treats wine as God's gift (Psalm 104:15), and Jesus made good wine at Cana. What Scripture forbids is drunkenness (Ephesians 5:18). For a young person, honoring parents and the law on this is part of keeping the Fourth Commandment.

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

1. Write a short collect of your own for this day. Use all five parts.

Answer: *Answers will vary. Example: "Almighty God, at Cana Your Son turned water into wine and showed His glory. Hear our prayers as He heard His mother, and give us Your peace all"*

our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

2. What does Jesus do for you when you bring Him your needs?

Answer: *He hears me and gives what is good, often better than I expect, just as He gave the best wine at Cana.*