



# The Holy See

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BENEDICT XVI

**ANGELUS**

*Saint Peter's Square  
Sunday, 20 January 2013*

**[Video]**

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

Today the liturgy proposes the Gospel episode of the wedding at Cana, recounted by John, an eyewitness of the event. This episode has been allocated to this Sunday which immediately follows the Christmas season because, together with the visit of the Magi from the East and the Baptism of Jesus, it forms the trilogy of the Epiphany, in other words the manifestation of Christ. The miracle of the wedding at Cana is in fact “the first of his signs” (Jn 2:11), that is, the first miracle that Jesus worked with which he showed his glory in public, inspiring faith in his disciples.

Let us briefly recall the events that occurred during that wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. It happened that there was not enough wine and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, pointed this out to her Son. He answered her that his hour had not yet come; but then acquiesced to Mary’s request and, having had the six large jars filled with water, he transformed the water into wine, an excellent wine, better than the previous one. With this “sign” Jesus revealed himself as the messianic Bridegroom come to establish with his people the new and eternal covenant, in accordance with the prophets’ words: “as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you” (Is 62:5). Moreover, wine is a symbol of this joy of love; but it also alludes to the blood that Jesus was to pour out at the end to seal his nuptial pact with humanity.

The Church is the Bride of Christ who makes her holy and beautiful with his grace. Nevertheless this bride formed of human beings is in constant need of purification. And one of the gravest sins

that disfigure the Church's face is that against her visible unity, the historical divisions that separated Christians and that have not yet been resolved. [The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is taking place in these very days, from 18 to 25 January](#), an event much appreciated by believers and communities, which reawakens in all the desire for, and spiritual commitment to, full communion.

Very important in this regard was [the prayer vigil I celebrated about a month ago in this square with thousands of young people from all over Europe and with the ecumenical community of Taizé](#): a moment of grace in which we experienced the beauty of forming one in Christ. I encourage everyone to pray together so that we may achieve "what the Lord requires of us" (cf. Mic 6:6-8), as the theme of the Week this year says. The theme was suggested by several Christian communities in India, who invite the faithful as brothers and sisters in Christ, to work hard to achieve visible unity among Christians, and to overcome every type of unjust discrimination. Next Friday, at the end of these days of prayer, I shall preside at Vespers in the [Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls](#), in the presence of the Representatives of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Dear friends, once again I would like to add to the prayer for Christian unity the prayer for peace. Praying that in the various wars that are, unfortunately, still raging, the despicable massacre of defenceless civilians may cease, an end be put to every form of violence and the courage be found for dialogue and negotiation. For these intentions, let us invoke the intercession of Mary Most Holy, Mediatrix of grace.

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#### **After the Angelus:**

I greet all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today's Angelus. In these days, we are celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Let us join our prayers to those of our brothers and sisters of all Churches and communities, that we may dedicate ourselves ever more earnestly to working towards our visible unity in Jesus Christ. God bless you and your loved ones!

I wish you all a good Sunday and a good week. Thank you. Have a good Sunday!

