When you have a home two blocks from the Notre Dame campus during football season, your spare bedroom becomes a hot commodity. It has been a delight to have so many family and friends visit us during home football game weekends for the last two seasons. It is even sweeter when the Irish are winning!

Stacey and I have always understood that marriage has an important outward-looking dimension. From the beginning, we wanted our marriage and family life to be for others and for the world in some way. This is why we picked the story of the wedding at Cana as the Gospel reading for our wedding Mass.

In the well-known story, Jesus and his mother attend a wedding at Cana. When the party runs low on wine, Mary notices and gets the attention of the servers. Without notifying Jesus, she instructs them to do whatever her son tells them to do. Jesus is a little surprised, but responds by changing water into wine.

It is not an insignificant first miracle for Jesus. Instead of the healings he could have accomplished, he saved a wedding feast. We chose this reading because we believe that God is active in our relationship in a similar way—that our marriage is a setting in which God acts in a remarkable way to bring people together to experience joy and abundance.

Over the years, we've learned the virtue of hospitality. We clean the house before visitors arrive, think through what we'll need for food and drink, and try to anticipate the needs and interests of our guests so that they will feel welcomed and at home. Hospitality is a learned skill—and we've learned it best from being warmly welcomed in the homes of many of our friends and relatives.

In the past month, I've come to learn that hospitality is a skill that we need to practice within our family, as well—not just with those who are visiting us.

For example, Stacey invests a lot of emotion and attention in her work with graduate students preparing for Church ministry. When she comes home at the end of the day, she could use some help getting settled back in to home life.

I've learned that one of the ways I can better love Stacey is to be a good host to her when she walks in the door. Because Stacey is all-in all the time, if she is presented with something that the kids need, she will respond to it before taking care of herself. She could easily get through the dinner hour without taking time to even change out of her work clothes.

To better host my wife, I've been trying to make sure that all of the school correspondence (forms and permission slips and spelling tests) are tucked away so that Stacey can browse through that stuff when she is ready. I've been trying to make sure that I greet her warmly when she steps in the door, that the kids are well on their way to getting through their homework, that a dinner plan is falling into place.

In essence, I've learned that Stacey is able to postpone worries about home life during her work day so that she can concentrate on the student sitting in front of her. But if all of the stressors from home are waiting to pile on her when she walks in the door (Is Simon reading enough? Has Oscar practiced his violin? Has Lucy written out her spelling words?), she ends up having a very long day.

There is a part of me in all of this that feels like Mrs. Cleaver, but I'm okay with that. This is the life that we've been called to, and I'm not going to throw a fit over stereotypes imposed on us by media. I will do whatever it takes to love my wife and my family, and loving them well means working for their good—anticipating their needs and attending to their thriving and growth.

I think I'm man enough to wear an apron.