

**2 Epiphany Year C**

**1/16/2022**

**Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11**

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Right after the calling of Jesus' disciples we have what has become known as the first miracle of Jesus.

Our Gospel reading today is the famous story of the water turned to wine.

Jesus' miracle at the wedding in Cana.

It is a wonderful story.

The first of seven signs in the Gospel of John.

It is also the third story of what makes up the feast of Epiphany.

As it reveals more of the glory of our Lord Jesus.

The wedding party runs out of wine...

which is a huge social blunder in the first century.

Mary the mother of Jesus recognizes this...

She has compassion...

And knows Jesus can do something about it.

It seems obvious that Jesus knows what Mary is suggesting when she says: *They have no wine.*

Jesus responds:

*Woman, what concern is that to you and to me?*

*My hour has not yet come.*

Don't get tripped up by the use of the word woman here...

To our ears it sounds rude or at least odd.

But then it was a term of endearment...

He seems reluctant to do anything.

Knowing that his time toward public ministry and the cross was not yet at hand...

And yet...

His mother, Mary says:

*Do whatever he tells you.*

There may be no truer words ever spoken.

In fact, today, we are going to let Mary preach...

Hear her words again:

*Do whatever he tells you.*

That is what it means to be a Christian.

That is what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

That is what it means to live out our faith...

*Do whatever he tells you.*

We are to do what Christ tells us to do.

When we face trials of various kinds...

We still love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind.

When people treat us poorly...

We still love our neighbors as ourselves.

When the culture and society of our world becomes ruthless...

We still go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel.

And when we practice what Christ tells us...

We are faithful.

So much of Christian culture...

And the culture of our world...

Is designed to get us to think big...

What I mean is from the moment we enter high school and graduate we are told that we can do whatever we want to do in life.

We are told to dream big...

And follow our hearts...

Many movies are shaped this way...

With themes of the main characters finding fame, fortune, and true love.

The fact of the matter is that very few actually become famous and transform the world in such massive ways.

For most of us, we wake up in our mid-life and begin to wonder how we got there.

We dream big... while we wash the dishes...

We consider the many things of life... while we drive the kids to school.

And what we actually have is a theology of the ordinary.

A theology of faithfulness in the midst of the coming and going of our daily lives.

We are taught to think that one day we can change the waters of this world to wine...

Only to find out that we are called to fill the jars with water.

We are called to

*Do whatever he tells you.*

J. C. Ryle, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bishop of Liverpool wrote:

[Jesus said: Fill the jars with water]

*The remark is frequently made by commentators on this verse, with much propriety, that these simple words describe the duty of all who work for Christ, and especially of ministers and teachers.*

*They are to hear Christ's voice, and do as He tells them, and then leave the result to Him.*

*Duties are ours.*

*Events are God's.*

*It is ours to fill the water-pots. It is Christ's to make the water wine.*

The duty of all Christians is to do what our Lord tells us.

That is the call of faithfulness.

Many of us go about our daily lives... wondering...

Do we really make a difference for Christ Jesus and his kingdom in this world?

We do by our prayers.

We do by our labors in building things...

By networking people together...

Through our attitudes...

Through sharing our faith...

Through showing love... when other show hate.

Through friendship...

Through encouragement.

We may spend the day behind a computer or painting a wall.

We may spend the day on the golf course or tending to our children.

But it is the ordinary things of this life that we are actually called to.

The hammer, the keyboard, the dishes are all the tools of our ministry.

The way we build this theology of the ordinary.

Just like the servants who did what Mary told them:

*Do whatever he tells you.*

Jesus said:

*Fill the jars with water.*

And so, they did.

Yesterday was the 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday of a wonderful leader of our nation.

Martin Luther King Jr.

We celebrate his birthday tomorrow on the holiday...

We celebrate our civil rights in this country tomorrow.

Martin Luther King is known for his contributions in the American Civil Rights Movement...

His speeches and rallies...

Protests and meetings...

Helped change a nation for the better.

We know the name Martin Luther King, Jr.

But how many of can name the hundreds...

The thousands...

that supported the movement by faithful ordinary means.

Martin Luther King said:

*Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability,  
but comes through continuous struggle.*

It's the faithfulness in the struggles of ordinary life that truly shape and grow us.

Today's lesson is a call to follow Jesus.

A call to obey him.

A call to *Do whatever he tells you.*

A call to *Fill the jars with water.*

At church that might look like being an usher...

Setting the table...

Reading the lessons...

At home it might look like spending time with your children...

Doing the laundry...

Filling the car with gas...

At work it might be pressure cleaning a sidewalk...

At leisure it might mean keeping the ball inbounds at pickleball.

Nevertheless, in ordinary life...

We obey the words of Mary the mother of God:

*Do whatever he tells you.*

What does Jesus tell us?

He tells us to love God with our whole being.

He tells us to love others.

Jesus did not come just to do cool miracles at weddings...

Jesus did not come just to teach us morals...

Jesus came to redeem our lives...

To transform our whole lives...

Even the everyday ordinary bits of our lives...

Jesus came to die for us...

To redeem us from sin and death.

To reconcile us to God.

So that we would flourish in our lives with and in him.

Sharing the good news of Jesus in this world.

Today...

Let us heed the words of St. Mary, the mother of Jesus...

Who said, "*Do whatever he tells you.*"

May we do what he tells us...

Amen.