

Homily

January 19, 2025

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

16:34 – 25:31

We have heard of the espousal of Israel and God, the very land itself espoused to God. Such wonderful wedding imagery.

And then of course, we hear from John's Gospel this story we all know very well: a wedding that has a major hiccup.

It might strike you as odd: we've just entered Ordinary Time, right? We're in Cycle C and typically in Cycle C, it's Luke's Gospel that we hear. Why John? Especially why this particular passage from John?

Well, this is one of the Manifestations of Jesus coming into the world – the sign. – There are seven signs. This is the first. This Gospel, the Gospel we hear for the Feast of Epiphany – the Magi – and the Gospel we heard last week, the Baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan – are each manifestations.

They were all originally (in different parts of the ancient world), among the Christians, the Gospel for Epiphany.

In the East you would have heard about John the Baptizer baptizing Jesus, or you would have heard this particular passage. In the West, it was the Magi. What the Church did when it revised the Lectionary, rather than trying to put them all on that day, spread them out.

So the manifestation of Jesus, God Among Us, three weeks in a row, but with different emphasis in each.

We hear of this wedding at Cana. (You know, scholars today have no idea where Cana was. They haven't dug it up yet.) And Jesus' mother is there.

Notice, she's only called "the Mother of Jesus." In John's Gospel you never hear the name "Mary." It's always just, "The Mother of Jesus."

Now John's Gospel is very much focused upon the divinity of Jesus. In John's Gospel, she is not named. I surmise that's because the emphasis is on Jesus' divinity. Sort of dampening down the humanity.

Well, she observes what the hiccup is: the wine is running short. In fact, she says, "There's no more wine." It's good that she intervened. She brought it to her son's attention. I'm fascinated that she brought it to his attention because, think about it. What's her son going to do? Would you do that for your son? "They have no wine." You'd probably tell him to go out and buy some more.

And Jesus' response – you know – that "Woman, what does your concern have to do with me?" Many of us see that as Jesus being rude to his own mother. Right? But actually in the ancient world, when a man met a woman that he did not know, that was the proper form of address, "Woman."

And in this case, since she is not named, it would seem that the Gospel writer used the same sort of approach as the Gospel was written. "Woman, what does your concern have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

What?! In John's Gospel account, "my hour" is the Crucifixion and death on the Cross. That's the glory, the fulfillment that brings about Salvation, the promise made, now fulfilled. Our reading today is the beginning of the Gospel. So of course his hour has not yet come.

But then she does something. She's already made the statement, "They're out of wine." And now she says to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (Confused look. – laughter.)

Okay. And he steps in and we know the story and how the water becomes wine. And everybody's amazed at this.

Which makes me wonder: What are we going to do with this? We're not at a wedding. We're not running short on wine. We don't address, "Woman." Right? We don't do that.

So, this ancient story, what do we do with it? Well, I want to suggest to us that there is a question that arises. “Will there be enough?”

Will there be enough?

And are we going to be a part of answering that question?

It is Mary – excuse me – the Mother of Jesus. It is the Mother of Jesus who steps in and basically raises the question: There is not enough. She makes note, calls it to attention and then helps bring it about.

So, will there be enough?

Will there be enough kindness shown to our neighbor?

Will there be enough shelter for the homeless, especially as this bitter cold comes down upon us?

Will there be enough integrity in our lives that folks will truly believe that Jesus is active and well in the world?

Or in our case as a parish –

Will there be enough prophets among us?

Will there be enough folks to help us understand the prophecy? - This is in reference to the Second Reading. God has given gifts, as it says – spiritual gifts to everyone.

But will there be enough of those exercised in the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes?

We could go on and on with that mantra, “Will there be enough...?” But my suggestion is, everyone of us needs to answer that question this week. What is it that we know is lacking? And once we’ve named it, how can we be a part of making “enough” to care for whatever issue it is?

And if we do that, we’re not only emulating the Mother of Jesus, but we’re also emulating the very person of Jesus. Who made enough for the celebration in his time.