

## **Second Sunday in Ordinary Time C - Do whatever he tells you**

January 19, 2025

Running out of wine at Wedding banquet, how can that be? The Chinese like to have banquets to celebrate weddings, baby one month old (now 100th days old), birthdays, anniversaries, etc. There would never be a shortage of foods or drinks, but maybe not enough doggie bags to take left-over home. In this Sunday's Gospel, St John (2:1-11) presents one of the best known miracles in Jesus' ministry, the changing of water into wine at Cana. There is far more than a wedding celebration saved from disaster by a miracle worked by Jesus. Christian tradition based on John 2:11 holds that marriage at Cana is the first public miracle of Jesus, though none of the Synoptic Gospels mention it. (Synoptic gospels are what gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to because they include many of the same stories, often in a similar sequence and in similar or sometimes identical wording. They contrast to John's, whose content is comparatively distinct.) The good news and hope implied by the story are in the words of the steward of the Feast when he tasted the good wine, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now" (John 2:10). This could be interpreted by saying simply that it is always darkest before the dawn, but good things are on the way.

The story also has had considerable importance in the development of Christian pastoral theology. The gospel account of Jesus being invited to a marriage, attending, and using his divine power to save the celebration from disaster is taken as evidence of his approval for marriage and earthly celebrations. But most important of all, it is considered to have the importance as the first of the seven signs (miracles) in the Gospel of John by which Jesus' divine status is attested, and around which the gospel is structured. It is the first "sign" that manifests Jesus' glory, but it only foreshadows the greatest of the signs that manifest his glory: his death on the cross. Jesus' mentioned that "my hour has not yet come" points to the hour that is yet to come - his passion and death for the salvation of humanity. Now with the miracle at the Cana wedding, the clock has started clicking. (Note: St John Gospel is also known as Gospel of Signs. The other six signs are: Healing the royal official's son in Capernaum in 4:46-54. Healing the paralytic at Bethesda in 5:1-15. Feeding the 5000 in 6:5-14. Jesus walking on water in 6:16-24. Healing the man blind from birth in 9:1-7. and the raising of Lazarus in 11:1-45 ) Biblical study like this can be interesting, fun and enjoyable, but it is useless if we do not allow it to affect our hearts and our lives. What is this passage saying to us? First of all, the passage points to the extraordinary transformation of the world begun at Cana. The transformation took place because people trusted in the Word of the Lord. "Do whatever he tells you." As our pleading mother, Mary is always anxious to bring our human needs into the mission of her Son. There are times when we feel alone. But we are never alone. Jesus guides us in our lives. He came to change us like he changed the water into wine, he calls us to himself and to change our way of living. He invites us to follow him in proclaiming the Good News to the whole world. We are also told that we need to be refreshed, to let Christ touch the water of our lives, and bring greater understanding. If we really want to change our lives, we have to turn to Christ and call on his help. Wherever Jesus is found, life is always changed for the better. When we run short, we need to turn to Jesus with open hearts and empty hands and he will make sure the wine of love and joy will always be part of our lives. God knows. God cares. God loves. God is with us. All we have to do is to trust in his Word, go to him so that he can touch us. "Do whatever he tells you." The passage also leads us to a consideration of the New World of Jesus Christ. This is a world where the ordinary becomes extraordinary, a world where simple people become great spiritual leaders, a world where the least important in society is raised up with God to be important in the Kingdom. Remember, in our baptism, we are all baptized by the Holy Spirit. We are all children of God and entitled to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Second Reading (1 Corinthians 12:4-11) tells about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit fills a person, it brings gifts as well. Traditionally, the Church has identified seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: Four of them are gifts for the mind: wisdom, understanding, good counsel, and knowledge. And three of them are gifts for the heart: piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord. With these gifts, none of us will be inferior, ordinary, hopeless or useless. Don't be depressed by what people are calling us,

don't get distracted by this materialistic world, don't worry about missing all the important events taking place around us. We are being enriched by his love in our families. For the Christians, anything that's ordinary can be extraordinary. We live in miraculous times. Jesus is transforming our world. Jesus of water and wine, healing and peace, grace and joy, love and mercy is pouring into our lives with gifts and filling us with wonders. All we have to do is to watch for the signs and do whatever he tells us.