



## January 16, 2022

### Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

*For Zion's sake I will not be silent... Isaiah 62:1*

Dear Friends;

Over the years, in my large family we have had some fun and memorable weddings. Our family weddings were moments to celebrate families coming together. It wasn't a celebration of status or ego. That means children were included. My mother disapproved of wedding invitations that excluded children (namely us kids) and that meant she and dad wouldn't be going. I am sure she would not approve of "destination weddings" like not including children it's a way of excluding family and friends who don't have the money to come and celebrate.

One of our family weddings that stand out in my mind was when my sister Stephanie married into an Italian family. It was the eighties and Steph wanted a black and white theme. So the bridesmaids (my five other sisters) were going to wear black dresses. Her future mother-in-law was from Italy and for the widow Capraro black at a wedding was bad luck. But for the sake of family harmony she graciously gave in.

The wedding went off very well and it came time for the reception. It was a large gathering since both families had a lot of people. During the reception one of my sisters told me that members of Tony's family had jugs of their homemade Italian vintage hidden under the tables. (I'm sure the venue would not have been happy with the competition for the bar) I told my sister not to mind it was cultural. There was no way the families would let us run out of wine for the party.

In the Gospel, Mary also wants to make sure there is sufficient wine for all the guests. Two people are supposed to be celebrating the happiest day of their lives with family and friends and they run out of wine? That is not just embarrassing but could be read as an omen: If there is too little wine for the wedding what else will be lacking in this Marriage? Who is to blame? The parents, the steward, the guests who drank too much? There are plenty of culprits to blame. But like the Japanese proverb "Fix the problem not the blame" Mary seeks to save the family from shame.

The fact that Mary is willing to intervene and involve Jesus indicates that they are related to the bride or groom. Otherwise their involvement would be seen as shameful. Mary is not satisfied with sitting back and letting the party die an embarrassing death. She tells Jesus, *"They have no wine."* Jesus responds with an answer like *"How is this our problem?"* He tells her that it is not yet "his hour." "The hour" of which Jesus speaks is his death and resurrection. The author of John's Gospel sees this story as a "sign" that points us, even now, to the endless banquet of God's love, life, and joy.

*"My hour has not yet come"* of Jesus' reply is not enough for Mary. Mary in the story represents the people of Israel, the bride, and the "espoused" of the Lord. (Isaiah 62:4) She voices the cry of the needy who have run out of joy. In faith Mary knows that God is too great and too generous to leave people joyless and ashamed. So she simply tells the servants to do whatever Jesus asks of them. She knew that all would in the end be well.

Two thousand years later Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King picks up on the persistence of Mary. He wrote *"Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of [people] willing to be co-workers with God."* Change never happens by waiting for the "right time." Mary the persistent guest at Cana urges us to trust that NOW is the HOUR. It is the hour to believe that the reign of God can be felt in our midst. The hour is here for us to respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit: to heal our families, churches, communities, nation and the world. The hour has come to be like Mary and be co-workers with God. It is the hour for us to do whatever it is Jesus tells us to do. Then we will know the abundant joy that God intends for all humankind. Wine enough for everyone.

Peace!

*Fr Ron*

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