

Dearly beloved, today we are gathered at a wedding banquet and Mary, Jesus mother, says, “They have no wine.” They have all the frills and trimmings of a happy wedding day. They have servants. They has guests. They have pretty napkins and flowers and table favors. They have music and dancing; tuxedos and dresses. Everything is in place. They have fond memories of the past, the excitement of the present, and dreams for the future. But one thing they don’t have is wine. What shall they do? Mary gives us the answer, she tells Jesus, “They have no wine.”

The day will be ruined if Jesus does not act. If the bride and groom do not ask Him to help; if they swallow hard, put on a fake smile and pretend everything is fine without the wine, then yes, their wedding will deteriorate. And they will be just another bride and groom, moving through the wedding, moving into the marriage, moving into a life where Jesus is not at work, where Jesus is not involved.

And isn’t that the way marriage is in this sinful and corrupt world? Jesus is not asked to help at the wedding. Sadly, too many are not getting married at all today. And if they do, Jesus is not asked to help in the marriage. Jesus is not asked to help when we run out of wine. Jesus is not asked to help when we run out of patience. Jesus is not asked to help when we run out of love. Jesus is not asked to help when we either the husband or the wife run out on the other; abandoning the other. Without Jesus at the heart and soul of our marriages and families, there is only a plain, common, relationship; nothing special. Without Jesus, there is no forgiveness, no love, no compassion, no understanding.

Dearly beloved, apart from Jesus, we have no wine. If we have not been joined together in our marriages by Jesus, as one flesh, there is no good in us. And so we, in faith, cry out, “We have no wine”. In our time of suffering and want, we ask Jesus to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. In our times of darkness and despair, we pray that Jesus would be our Light. On those days when love is cold, we cry out for Jesus to be our warmth. On those days when we are weak, we beg for Jesus to be our strength and our song.

Then we hear the very last words of Mary recorded for us in Holy Scripture, she tells the servants, “Do whatever Jesus tells you.” These are words of faith, trusting that God does the very best thing, at the very best time. In our marriages and families, Jesus has done the best thing; He has joined Himself to them, He has made Himself present in them, He is actively involved, taking care of us. “Do whatever Jesus tells you” these are Mary’s words of faith and they are our words of faith as well. As we live our lives as husbands and wives, as fathers and mothers, as sons and daughters, we trust that Jesus will provide for us the very best things, at the very best moment. Jesus has done and is doing the Father’s good and gracious will for us, in this we rejoice, give thanks and sing.

As husband and wife, we are utterly and totally dependent upon Jesus. We pray that Jesus would transform our human love for one another into divine love; one that is the picture of Jesus love for us. A love, where the husband loves the wife so much that he humbles himself, willingly giving up his life for his bride. A love, where the husband is more concerned about his wife than himself. This is how Jesus loves His bride, the holy Christian Church. And so too, with the wife, with the bride, she honors, serves and obeys her husband, not because she is to be barefoot and pregnant, but because the groom willingly gives up himself and all that he is and has for her. The bride responds with love because the groom first loves her and shows her that he does love her. The relationship between one man and one woman, having been joined together as one flesh, is a living picture of the relationship with Christ and His Church.

In marriage we are made bone of each other’s bone and flesh of each other’s flesh. And when we ask Jesus for wine, as we should every day in our marriages, we are asking for Jesus to

keep us that way always; that what God has joined together by His Holy Word, no man or demon or worldly influence may separate. In our marriages, may humble ourselves and pray, "We have no wine." May we always realize that Jesus does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. That is the kind of God that we have. Jesus is our dwelling place, in Him we dwell. He embraces husband and wife, parents and children in the arms of His love, never letting us go. Jesus leads us and guides us that we would live before Him in righteousness and purity forever. Jesus shapes us in His image, that in our love for each other, our neighbor sees the great love that God has for us and them. Jesus blesses our homes, giving us a devout husband or wife, devout children and all that we have; He richly and daily provides us with all that we need to support this body and life. Because of Jesus, our homes are a shelter for the defenseless, a fortress for the tempted, a resting place for the weary, and a foretaste of our eternal home in heaven; where there will be no more suffering, no more pain, no more tears, only rejoicing.

Today, the Second Sunday of Epiphany, used to be called "Home Sunday" because it emphasized Jesus relationship to our home life. Jesus is an ever present reality in our homes. He is there, during the trivial annoyances of everyday life. He is there, in the middle of the fighting and the arguing. He is there, in the hurts and the pains and the suffering. Jesus, the Son of God, came down from heaven, becoming man, to become not only a part of, but at the center of our daily lives. Jesus is our Helper and our Friend and our Brother, in every event of our lives.

By gracing this wedding with His divine presence and relieving the need for more wine, our Lord has for all times shown how highly God esteems marriage. Marriage is not just a contract which men and women can enter into and break at their own choosing. Marriage is for life, until death separates you. Marriage is and remains a sacred ordinance established by God that we are to uphold and defend. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman, as it was first established with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Marriage was instituted for the preservation and blessing of the human race. Blessed are all married couples and all baptized children of God who make Jesus the most welcome Guest in our homes. Because Jesus is always present, even when we don't realize it or ask Him, we will see and do see the miracle of turning the water of want and tears into the blessed wine of help and comfort and strength and joy and hope. With Jesus being present we will grow in faith toward Him and in fervent love toward each other. Jesus will be present, at the center of our marriages, families and homes, in good times and in bad, in richness and in poverty, in sickness and in health; all according to His holy will. In Jesus, our cup will run over, goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life, and we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Thanks be to God.

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, I would like to learn the art of holding Your hand and receiving Your help, at a time when the world seems to act as if You don't exist. Teach me to be like You mother, Mary. Even she spoke to You about the wine that had run out. Remind me to speak to You about small annoyances and shameful things. I badly need the reminder she gave the servants: to do everything that You say. It is You alone that I desire to listen to. Help me to do that and to remember that You are the most important thing of all; it is You that I need the most. Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, now and forever. Amen.