

Grace and peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; Amen.

The gospel text is again a message we have heard as many times as we have attended church. This narrative appears at least once yearly in the Lectionary cycle. Additionally this text is also the most used reading for wedding ceremonies as it identifies Jesus as a guest at a wedding.

To give this text a new life and a new meaning for us today is to [again] ask ‘God alone’ what more we need to know and understand about this story. Jesus changes water into wine at the wedding at Cana is the very first public miracle that Jesus is witnessed and recorded performing. To read and reflect upon only the truth of the text is to see that God is doing so much than we see or notice. With that said, to see what God is doing at the Wedding of Cana is to better understand and recognize what God is doing with us and around us in the world here and now.

The first detail to notice in the text is that Jesus is a guest at the wedding who does not initiate any action, assistance, or support. Rather it is the mother of Jesus who identifies the wine is gone and makes this known to Jesus. He in turn replies the situation they are in is not His concern. Jesus is, however, compassionate and understanding when needs arise.

What happens next is beautiful my friends because is it Mary to tells the servants (the servers) to listen to the Lord and do what He commands them to do. Mary has great faith, she is the mother of our Lord and she knows exactly who Jesus is and she knows that He will provide.

What follows is the command from Jesus to fill the jars with water, which then become wine. If we stop here and merely accept the miracle we will miss what God is revealing to us. Ask and you shall receive, knock and the door will be opened, seek and ye shall find. My friends when we ask God *why the clay jars* the answer comes again to look back in Genesis.

Twice now in as many weeks in this New Year, Genesis has provided the foundation to what God is doing in the world for our sake. Genesis is an essential source of understanding in that God wants to be known and is willing to share the mysteries with us. Consider the creation narrative of humankind; “So God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created them, male and female he created them.” Gen. 1:27

As I share with you often, there are no coincidences in Holy Scripture and it is no coincidence there is two accounts of creation. Hear the words of Genesis 2:7, “Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.”

We come from the dust of the earth. Genesis 3 God tells Adam (after committing sin) “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taking; you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

The stone jars at the wedding of Cana is a sign that God will pour His Holy Spirit into dust of humanity. The jars are God’s people! When God’s Spirit is given to His people we

become more than living creatures, we become exceptional people before Almighty God! When the wine from the jars is presented to the steward, he acknowledged the wisdom of saving the best for last.

This is not a parable, this is not speculation, this is not just Jesus's first miracle, it is, in fact God revealing to humankind what He is about to do for our sake to make us exceptional before our Creator. The message here is momentous my friends in that we are the clay jars that contain the treasure of God, the very Holy Spirit that makes you and me - exceptional to God. God has restored us to our rightful place with Him and it was all recorded and witnessed for all people to know.

However, is this the end of the story? The first miracle of Jesus also has something to do with one of the last miracle Jesus reveals to us. At the Wedding of Cana, Jesus turns water into wine. In the meal in the upper room on the night when He was betrayed our Lord Jesus Christ turned wine into the blood of Christ; a miracle that we continue to observe, celebrate, and give thanks for today!

And it is not a coincidence that Jesus's first miracle was at a wedding because it is a Great Wedding that the Holy Spirit is preparing for God and us at this very moment. The great banquet feast we so often refer to in our Liturgy and read in Holy Scripture in the Prophets, Psalms, and Parables... is the banquet at the wedding of Christ and His Church; His people! The time of great joy and rejoicing when tears will be no more and where love endures forever.

The meaning and message of the Wedding at Cana and Jesus's first miracle will provide the life, light, and hope in our world today when we allow our faith to see the exceptional people of God around us. Without faith, we cannot understand the meaning and message in the gospel text; without faith we cannot see the magnitude of what God is doing in the world around us; without faith we cannot see the hope for the world tomorrow.

Our generous and gracious God 'does' grants us the gift of faith so we can see, understand, and share our faith with others. We are granted the courage to love one another, the strength to care for each others, and the compassion to participate in life-together with people everywhere.

This is the Good News of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ our Lord and a message for all people in all times. As earthen vessels, we have been filled with the Holy Spirit and we are truly exceptional to God and to one another. The time is now to share this message of Good News, hope, and joy with all people because the banquet is being prepared and no one will be left out, forgotten or left-behind.

The Holy Spirit has been given to us to complete the work that God has placed before us; to send the invitations and spread the news for the sake of the peace that passes all understanding to keep our hearts and minds, forever through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.