

Homily of Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, 2025

Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 96:1-3, 7-10; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; John 2:1-11

This year's liturgical calendar is different. Last Sunday, the First Sunday in Ordinary Time, we celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In two weeks, we will punctuate the Ordinary Time to celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

The Ordinary Time refers to those periods that fall outside of the major liturgical seasons like Advent and Christmas seasons, and Lent and Easter seasons. The Church uses green vestments and decorations during the Ordinary Time to symbolize that we are alive in Christ and that we are on an ongoing journey of faith. We can liken the seasons of Advent and Christmas and the seasons of Lent and Easter to be seasons of sowing while the Ordinary Time season to be the season of sprouting, nurturing, blooming, flowering, and bearing fruits. We pray for one another that the graces we received during the Advent and Christmas seasons do not die out but sprout, nurtured, bloom, flower, and bear lasting fruit. Green means alive, active, proceed, etc. We can apply the meanings to our spiritual life.

The background of the first reading is that when the Jews returned from the Babylonian exile (538 B.C.), they found Jerusalem in ruins. Its temple, walls, and buildings were razed to the ground. Desolation was everywhere. The sight of this left the returnees in distress and despair. God sent Prophet Isaiah to console the people. God promised through Isaiah: "I will not keep silent. I will not be quiet... You shall be called by a new name pronounced by the mouth of God... You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord. A royal diadem held by your God... No more shall people call you 'Forsaken,' or your land 'Desolate,' but you shall be called 'My Delight'..." As we begin a new year, these words and promises are for each one of us, especially for those going through grief and desolation. Hebrews 1:3 says that God sustains us "by his powerful word." Another translation says, "by his powerful command."

It is relevant at the beginning of the year that St. Paul reminds us in the second reading that God has blessed each of us with spiritual gifts for the benefit of all and the Church. St. Paul writes, "To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit" (1 Corinthians 12:7). There is no gift-less individual. Our spiritual gifts are not supposed to be hidden. They are supposed to manifest. Can I identify my gifts? Do my gifts manifest? Can I identify where my gift manifest? What are the impacts of their manifestation? We are invited to reflect over these questions, as we begin a new year. Someone says, "Do not go to the grave with your song unsung."

Also, today's gospel is very relevant for our reflection as we begin a new year. One can only imagine how the wedding reception could have continued with no wine. The role Mary played in saving the couple from confusion and embarrassment is very important. She said to Jesus, "They have no wine." Jesus clearly stated that his hour had not yet come. But, because Mary interceded for the couple, his hour began at that moment. He changed water into wine.

Mary instructed the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” The servers filled six stone jars with water as Jesus directed them. I wonder what was on the minds of the servers as they filled the stone jars with water. It would have been absurd for them to be told to fill stone jars with water when the problem was lack of wine. Nonetheless, they followed the instructions given by Mary and Jesus. The servers’ obedience to Mary and to Jesus enabled the miracle. The servers’ obedience teaches us to trust God even when from human reasoning, it appears meaningless to trust him.

It is significant that the gospel states that Mary and Jesus were invited to the wedding (John 2:1). If they were not invited, the wedding reception would have ended badly. This passage, also, teaches us that where Jesus and Mary are invited ‘wine’ will never run out. Let us invite them through our prayers to everything that is going on in our lives. Mary is the Mother of Perpetual Help. Her powerful intercession opens the doors of Divine Mercy.

We celebrated Epiphany when the Magi revealed Jesus, and his Baptism when God revealed him. Today, Jesus reveals himself through the miracle of changing of water into wine. Today’s gospel concludes, “Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him” (John 2:11). We pray that Jesus, also, reveals his glory to us by performing signs in our various areas of need. May he change our ‘water’ into ‘wine.’ Amen.

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