

The Second Sunday of Epiphany

January 20, 2013

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 36:5-10

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Following the baptism of Jesus by John, the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, all tell us that Jesus was drawn into the wilderness and there he was tempted by Satan. John takes us to a wedding.

This is not a wedding as we might understand it; this was enormous. Everybody was invited. The wedding might last a week. The guests received gifts. The guests were fed, and the guests consumed a lot of wine.

Thus, it is in John's Gospel that Jesus, following His experience at the Jordan, has called His disciples. One theory is that one of the disciples was a relative of the bride or groom. Another is that there was a connection between the family of Jesus and that of the groom, specifically Jesus' mother Mary. But Jesus and His followers are welcome even though they are late, really late if the wine has run out.

Mary, a Jewish mother, has complete confidence in her son: "Just listen to him; he can fix it." But Jesus replies – actually in the original Greek "Woman" which is a standard form of address, no disrespect

implied, “What’s that got to do with you and me?” And, as written in the Greek, Jesus actually says, “Has not yet my hour come?”

There’s a different sound to that isn’t there? To John, Jesus need not go to a wilderness to be tempted by Satan to show off His powers; He can find temptation right here at a wedding in Cana. How tempting it would be to make a great public demonstration, wave his arms and make great quantities of wine appear. How tempting to draw attention to himself, to be seen as a worker of miracles or, more likely, just a magician.

But Jesus’ hour has come. He knows it. He has heard the voice at the Jordan proclaiming Him God’s beloved Son, entrusting Him with a work, a mission. He knows that if He has any power to effect change it is in fact God working in Him and through Him.

Nothing, absolutely nothing Jesus says or does may diminish that work. It is sometimes called “The Messianic Secret.” Tell no one of what you have seen, because what you have seen pales to insignificance against the power of God.

No one knows where all that wine has come from, no one except astonished servants and, perhaps, some amazed disciples. The host of the feast congratulates the bridegroom, not Jesus, with the most significant words of this reading, “You have kept the best for last.”

This is the first miracle, the beginning of a long, long story that will unfold through the seasons of the church year, following the life and works of Jesus. Perhaps we might call that a feast. We follow that unfolding story to an end at the cross and a new beginning in the joy of the Resurrection. That is the best, and God has saved it for last.

In His Holy Name.