

Epiphany III

Romans 12:16-21 & John 2: 1-11

Our life, the life that we live here on earth, could be seen, sometimes, as a movie, a movie with different actors and different scenes. Some of the things we experience don't make sense to us at the time, but later on, we see the reason why we face them.

Today's gospel could be considered as a movie where the actors are assigned specific roles to play. It is about a wedding feast. In Ancient Israel, a wedding feast is called *simcha* which means "a joyful event" as it's still today in every culture around the world. It is a well planned and well executed event which involves not only the bride and the bridegroom, but also their families, friends, neighbors, and the entire community.

We see the same thing happening here at Cana where Mary, Jesus, the disciples, and many people from the local community came to celebrate with the new wedded couple. They all came to show their love to this young man and his bridegroom. It is a social gathering, but God will use it to do something supernatural: the first miracle that Jesus did according to St John, the evangelist.

What do we learn from this wedding at Cana?

1 The first lesson for us is in the invitation – The couple invited not only their friends, neighbors, family members, but they also invited Mary, Jesus, and his disciples. And the miracle happened. When you invite God into your life, he comes, and he takes control of everything. We see the same thing happening in the case of Bartimaeus, the blind man, sitting and begging on the roadside of Jericho (Mark 10: 46-52). When he invited Jesus into his life, He turned it around. Bartimaeus was able to see, he put off his garment (the old man) and followed Jesus. Let us always invite and welcome the Lord into our life just like this couple and Bartimaeus.

2 The second lesson is the words of Mary to the servant: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it".

Notice that the servants didn't say a word. Did they? Not only did they listen to Mary, but they knew very well their job description. You need to know your job description as a Christian. Everyday you should ask yourself these questions: "What was I baptized to do"? Or "why do I come to church"? "Why St Alban's" and not St Jude, or St Barnabas?

There is a reason why God put you here. You need to know your job description. The servants didn't say a word because they knew what they were called to do: to serve unconditionally.

A Church is not a Republic where we pick and choose whom to serve and how to serve. The servants probably didn't know Jesus. He was not their master, but they obeyed his order. We are

called to do the same. Serving God may not make sense to ordinary people, but it does make sense to Him.

3 The third lesson I see here is at the end of the story. It's just like in a movie. Sometimes, you get the understanding of what is happening only at the end of the movie. So, when we read this story of the wedding at Cana, the understanding comes only at the end: "*This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and **manifested** forth his glory; and his disciples **believed** on him.*" (John 2: 11) That was the purpose of the whole story, the reason of the presence of Jesus at this wedding. All these actors in the story –knowingly and unknowingly---worked to achieve the same goal: the manifestation of the glory of God (another Epiphany) and the building up the faith of the disciples.

You see, there is a tendency in Christianity today to pick and choose our worship style (Wrong!). Our faith is a gift from God, so is our worship style (It's to serve God). The word worship means service. We come to church to give God a laudable service. The way we worship is given to us by God. In our thanksgiving prayer after Communion, we ask God to "assist us his grace, that we may continue in that fellowship, and **do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in**". Our worship style comes from God, not from a man. He is the One that called us and has prepared for us what we need to do and how we ought to worship him, so that he may be glorified and our faith established and strengthened.

May the Lord always give us the understanding of who we are and of what we are called to do and how to do it.

Prayer

D IRECT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen