

The story of the wedding at Cana is about wine and weddings, mothers and sons for sure. But I want you to consider that this familiar story is also about telling time. It's about recognizing when the time is right, when it is time to move forward, when everything is in place. Those are the moments when we see Jesus for who he is.

The gospel writer gives us time clues. He starts by saying, "after 3 days..." and the faithful who hear those words would remember the great revelation of God that came after 3 days in a tomb. We are invited into the festive time of a wedding celebration, a when two families join, and hope for a new future, new life unfolds. A wonderful time.

Yet a problem arises: they've run out of wine.

Certainly this would be an embarrassment, a source of gossip for family and guests, but there is something more important that the prospect of the celebration going dry. We know that plentiful wine comes from a plentiful harvest, but our wedding guests also believed that a plentiful harvest was a sign of God's plentiful blessing, and so.....

A lack of wine would point to a lack of God's blessing – a blessing of the land that made it fertile, and on the people as well. Too little wine could become the first step in a cascade of privation as the land refused to yield good harvest, wombs refused to yield a new generation. Too little wine could be the beginning of shared suffering for the whole community and it casts a shadow on the joyous celebration, birthing an anxiety about what comes next.

They have no wine, Mary says in that shorthand that exists between parent and child.

Jesus answers "The time isn't right,"

But Mary knew better. She could see the signs. When she tells the servants to follow his instructions.... she is really talking to Jesus and her message is this **"it's time."** It's time for the birthing of this new creation that will come through you. It's time to make yourself known. No more waiting.

I wonder if it was her experience as the mother of Jesus which helped her recognize the earliest of the birth pangs of God's revelation in Jesus. This woman who had watched God's plan grow in her body over the months, and her son grow from toddler to man.

Either way, the hour had come for the story to move forward, for the world to know who this Jesus was and the story began with a crisis over wine, the fruit of the vine, the sign of prosperity and blessing.

No one else seemed to notice the crisis with the wine. While the wine flowed, no one worried about a potential disaster. The bride and groom would be lost in their own world, exhausted by the celebration which was already days old.

The guests who up to now had drunk their fill, were busy partying. They didn't know that it was all about to run dry. The disaster hadn't touched them yet. Their lives were pleasant and their bellies filled with food and drink.

Only the servants knew. The ones – for whom this celebration meant more work, and who would bear the brunt of the master's angry embarrassment -they knew that when bad times come, they'd be the first to suffer and the last to be saved. While all the guests reveled in joyous abandon, the servants knew what it was like when it all dried up.

Here in some backwater village, at a family wedding, Jesus begins to unveil the Divine presence - not with fireworks, but with water and wine; and his revelation comes not to the honored guests but to the servants who filled the jars. It was the beginning of a story filled with ordinary people and infusing ordinary objects with divine meaning.

Who are these servants who watch as simple water miraculously becomes an extravagant supply of delectable wine? I'll tell you who they are not.....

They are not the ones who refuse a vaccine... but the ones from poor countries around the world for whom no vaccine is available

They are not the ones who are eating less beef because it's expensive... but the ones who eat less every day.

They aren't the ones who are selling a home to retire to Florida... but the ones seeking a local shelter.

They aren't the ones who debate virtual classrooms... but the girls who are barred from all education.

They are not the ones with whom we disagree politically ...but the ones who are targeted and imprisoned because they are in the minority

God's revelation came to them as they watched Jesus turn water into wine. ...these servants whose lives had taught them what to expect when the wine runs dry. These servants are the ones who are offered a first glimpse of the glory of God in Jesus, right there, in their midst. And what they saw was the unimaginable richness that comes from the hand of God as a gift to God's beloved children. Jesus began with the ones who could see most clearly, who knew blessing when they saw it.

Where are we? Standing on the sidelines watching this ancient drama, wondering how attentive we are. Would we notice? Do we notice the abundance that flows from the hand of God?

John tells us, "No one knew where the wine had come from"....except the servants, of course....and Mary.....and Jesus. This was the beginning, a foretaste of what lie ahead, a glimpse of the generosity of God, a sign of hope for those who were counted among the least....and for the whole world.

This is our Lord, standing in the midst of us. Watch for him in the dry places, look for unexpected blessings, and then give thanks for the hand of God.