

# Homily for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 19-20, 2019

Readings: Isaiah 62: 1-5; 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11; John 2: 1-11

Preacher: Susan Howard

Brothers and sisters,

Let's get this out on the table at the start. We have been abusing each other. We have not treated each other with respect. We have misused our power, by seduction, manipulation and greed.

All of us, everywhere.

The divisions and derision, the venom and the fear—It makes me scratch my head. It's as if we have abandoned our faith. Have we have forgotten who God is?

At the beginning of Ordinary Time, as we once again dive into Holy Scripture, we have a new opportunity to uncover more truths about who Jesus is and what new insights we might glean from his dramatic and radical teachings—teachings meant to change our lives.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul raises up the dignity of the human person with a list of Spirit-driven gifts. It reminds and extols us to respect the gifts that God has given each one; woman and man, rich and poor, people of all ethnicities, and orientations. All are gifted in one way or another. Each person a gift from God.

Not earned, but graced. How radical is that!

I, for one, need to step forward and accept the fact that I have been part of the problem. I am a white, middle class woman, with a good education and plenty of family and community supports. I am privileged. I have always thought of myself as hard working and deserving of everything that came my way, as if I earned it on my own. I didn't even feel too guilty about my misdeeds. I mean, I really was a good person, or so I kept telling myself. Well that attitude and sense of entitlement has got to go! Where is my humility, my humanity?

But today I have hope. We have the privilege of hearing about Jesus's first miracle. At a wedding feast He transforms ordinary water into the choicest of wines. He takes no credit for this miracle, he doesn't boast or brag, he simply acts out of kindness. And what a wonderful reminder from our Mother—to act without being asked.

On another level, what does this miracle say about transformation? Jesus transformed the whole social fabric of the wedding feast. He elevated the hosts of the banquet, not bringing shame to them or diminishing their lack of wealth or poor planning abilities. He raised them up so that everyone could participate in their joy! On a personal note, oh what I wouldn't do for that kind of personal transformation. And if we could be transformed individually then couldn't we transform our own family, work place, school, and city? That will be my prayer for the New Year.

But there's more! What if our whole world could be transformed! What if we respected the God-given gifts of all the people? If we came to a new and radical understanding of the interdependence of all people. And even greater than this, the interdependence of all living things. What if we could breathe in harmony with God as at the beginning of creation? You may think I'm going overboard now, but look back at today's readings.

God wants to hold us all in an intimate embrace, crown us with the most precious jewels. Then endowed with the abundance of gifts that have come from our creator's hands, we are poured out on the world like the best wine.

I want to be at that party! If they will have me. I hope you are all there too! As flawed as we are and as far as we are from understanding God's ways, I sure do believe there is hope for us yet!