

The Second Sunday after the Festival of the Epiphany of our Lord  
St. John 2:1-11  
January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

### When They Ran Out of Wine

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank Thee, that of Thy grace Thou hast instituted holy matrimony, in which Thou keepest us from unchastity, and other offenses: We beseech Thee to send Thy blessing upon every husband and wife, that they may not provoke each other to anger and strife, but live peaceably together in love and godliness, receive Thy gracious help in all temptations, and rear their children in accordance with Thy will; grant unto us all to walk before Thee, in purity and holiness, to put all our trust in Thee, and lead such lives on Earth, that in the world to come we may have everlasting life, through the same, Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Apostle and Evangelist St. John writes at the beginning of today's Gospel pericope that our Lord + Jesus attended a wedding on the third day in Cana of Galilee. Well, any good Bible student would naturally ask, "The third day of what?" What happened on the first and second days? The Evangelist is describing the first few days of our Lord's ministry. On the first day, our Lord + Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist, as we heard this past Wednesday on the Festival of the Baptism of our Lord from the Evangelist St. Matthew's Gospel. On the second day, our Lord + Jesus once again goes to where St. John the Baptist is baptizing and this time when St. John points out to his disciples, "Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world" two of his disciples begin to follow the Lord + Jesus.

When our Lord + Jesus notices them following, He asks them what they want; to which they respond that they want to see where He is staying, and He invites them to the place He is staying. We also learn from the Gospel Evangelists that these two men were Sts. Andrew and John, the writer of this Gospel. St. Andrew was the brother of St. Peter, and St. John was the brother of St. James the Elder. In addition, we learn that St. Philip, who was from the same city as Sts. Andrew and Peter, was called by the Lord + Jesus. He also brought St. Nathaniel to our Lord, in whom was no guile, and whom our Lord + Jesus saw sitting under the fig tree, and of which we read in our daily readings this past week. In all on the third day there were six Apostles already called by the Lord + Jesus, who followed Him.

On this third day after our Lord's baptism, He, and His Apostles, attend a wedding in Cana of

Galilee. We see how quickly our Lord begins His ministry. From His baptism on the first day, to His calling of half of His Apostles on the second day, to a wedding feast on the third day where He performs His first miracle.

That this wedding happens on the third day of our Lord's ministry is significant in another way. In our society, weddings usually happen on a Friday or Saturday; at the end of the week on the so-called "weekend." This was not the case with Jewish weddings. The Jews would get married on the third day of the week; on our Tuesday. The reason for this was because of what was created on the third day. On the third day of creation our Triune Lord God separated the dry ground, which He called earth, from the waters, which He called seas. He then brought forth on the dry ground, every type of seed and herb. In other words, on the third day of creation, the world was filled with life; all plant life was created. In the same way that the earth became fruitful on the third day, it was the Jewish hope that having a wedding on the third day would make the newly married couple also fruitful; that they might bring forth new life and fill the world with their offspring.

The wedding was a celebration of life. Not just that a joyous thing was happening in two people's lives, but that this joining together of two people—a man and a woman—into one flesh would produce new life; this union would produce children. Contrary to modern man's anti-science delusion that gender is some sort of manmade construct; the anti-basic-biology delusion that two men or two women can produce offspring and raise them, the Jews understood that in order for their two to be new humans, a man and a woman needed to come together in holy matrimony. The two were to unite into one flesh on this third day—the day when the earth brought new life and filled all the Earth.

That these two, newly united in holy matrimony, would bring forth new life, was a cause for celebration. This celebration included the drinking of wine. Wine makes the heart glad, it produces laughter and makes men merry, as the Scriptures testify. And make note that this was actually wine, not grape juice, or unfermented wine (whatever that is, because if it is unfermented, it is not wine). Therefore, this is truly and substantially wine in use at this wedding. Wine was vital to put men into a good mood. The feast had a steady flow of wine to put the wedding guests in a merry mood. The task of the master of the feast was to make sure that enough wine flowed to make men merry and glad of heart, but not so much that it became a drunken den of debauchery.

It was therefore a bad thing that the wedding in Cana of Galilee ran out of wine. It would kill the mood. It would put a damper on the wedding. It would not bode well for the newly married couple to have a wedding feast in which people became bored and restless. So, when our Lord's mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, comes to our Lord + Jesus and tells Him that they have no wine, it is clear that she is not only no stranger to the people of this wedding feast, but also, she knows them well enough to care how this wedding proceeds. It also shows that she believes that the Lord + Jesus, her firstborn Son, could do something about the problem.

We are then told by the Apostle and Evangelist St. John, who as one of the first six Apostles was at this feast with the Lord + Jesus, and was therefore an eyewitness to these events, that there were six waterpots used in the purification rites each containing twenty or thirty gallons. To get an idea of how much this is, picture in your minds a five-gallon bucket and then imagine five of those five-gallon buckets. That is the amount of *one* of these six waterpots, and there were *six* of them. Even with the largest of weddings where the whole town attended, it would be hard for them to run out of wine. Whatever was not drunk at the feast would be gifted to the wedding couple. When our Lord + Jesus turns the water in these jugs that are filled to the brim into wine, it is a grand and generous wedding gift. Even more so is this a wonderful gift because the master of the feast comments to the bridegroom that this was the best of wines.

The good wine has been kept until now. Our Lord + Jesus has appeared to His people Israel in

these latter times. The waiting is now over. Our Lord + Jesus has come and performs His first miracle on the third day after His baptism. The good wine—our Lord + Jesus—is now set before His people. They will drink of His holy Word and His preaching will make men's hearts glad and make them merry that their sins are forgiven on account of His works and merits. We also drink of the good wine that is our Lord + Jesus, Who has been set before us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. We receive the good wine of the Blood of our Lord + Jesus with the good bread of His Body given to us in the foretaste of the heavenly and eternal wedding feast of Heaven.

One cannot read this narrative from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John about our Lord + Jesus Christ's first miracle and not make the connection that both of the sacraments—Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper—are alluded to in this miracle. Water is used in Holy Baptism that purifies and cleanses us from all sins. The waterpots used to hold the water were used in the purification rites. Water from these jars would be used to cleanse people symbolically of their sinfulness. Our Lord + Jesus in His Holy Baptism a few days prior to this purified and cleansed all waters for use in Holy Baptism. This Holy Baptism that our Lord + Jesus gifts us with does not just cleanse and purify us symbolically, but this washing of water is a washing and regeneration of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is implanted in us through the waters of Holy Baptism. We receive Him in faith, which clings to the benefits that our Holy Baptism bestows upon us.

The water in these six waterpots used for purification our Lord + Jesus turns into wine. One of the two elements, with bread, that is used in the Sacrament of the Altar. Water and wine flow on the third day of our Lord's ministry as He performs His first miracle at the wedding of Cana of Galilee. On the last day of His ministry, the day when He atones for the sins of the whole world, so that those who believe on Him might be justified through faith, water and blood flowed from His pierced side at His death on the cross. This water and blood flows into the Cup of life given us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. We drink the Blood which He poured out for our redemption in the wine of this Blessed Sacrament. With the bread that is His Body, we receive the Blood that flowed from His pierced side, and in this Body and Blood given in bread and wine we receive forgiveness for all our sins, with the gifts of eternal life and salvation. We obtain these things through faith. The faith gifted to us by the Holy Ghost through the means of grace.

On the third day of creation our Triune Lord God brought forth from the earth every seed and herb, and all plants good for food and sustenance. On the third day of our Lord's ministry and the third day of the week, He attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee with His new Apostles. They saw this miracle and believed on Him. This means that our Lord + Jesus was baptized on the first day of the week, the day when light first broke through the darkness that filled and covered the void of the Earth. Our Lord + Jesus, the Light of the world, began His ministry by breaking through the darkness of sin that filled and covered this Earth on Sunday. He ended His ministry on the sixth day of the week, on Good Friday. He Who created mankind on the sixth day, and separated them into male and female—a man and a woman—took the place of mankind and died his death, so that through Him mankind might have life eternal. On the third day after His death, on Sunday again—the eighth day—He rose again from the dead, giving us assurance that the gift of His Blood, which we drink in wine, was accepted by the heavenly Father, so that we and all mankind have had our sins atoned for, and that all those who believe on Him will be justified through faith.

They ran out of wine at the wedding of Cana in Galilee, but our Lord + Jesus in His mercy has filled to the brim the jars that contain the waters of purification, and turned them into the good wine that makes the hearts of men glad and merry. Therefore, my dear friends, let us rejoice that we can come to this altar and receive the good wine of our Lord's Blood for the remission of our sins, and that we can rejoice daily in the waters of our purification as we remember and proclaim our Holy Baptisms that wash away from us all sin. Our Lord + Jesus has performed this miracle for us, and for our benefit. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

We thank Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that Thou didst hallow and adorn the holy estate of matrimony by Thy presence, and we humbly beseech Thee Thou wouldst continually preserve and bless this holy ordinance, protect us from impurity and offenses, and evermore dwell in all Christian homes, relieving all their necessities in Thine own good time, O Thou, true God and faithful Friend of men, Who, having power over all things, livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*