

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany of our Lord
St. John 2:1-11
January 18th, 2026
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

This Beginning of His Signs

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“This beginning of His signs did + Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.”

Prayer in Pulpit before 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 that 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.

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

My dear friends, this narrative is often called “The Wedding in Cana.” However, the reading has very little to do with the actual wedding itself. The Gospel is really about the wine for the guests. The wine is gone. To run out of wine at a wedding was a social faux pas. There was supposed to always be enough wine for the guests to become, “well drunk.” In other words, there was to be enough wine for all the guests to have a good buzz going, and be able to maintain that buzz until the party was over. But, they have run out of wine before the party is over.

So, the Blessed Virgin Mary goes to her Son. She simply says to Him, “They have no wine.” It is quite a different interaction from last week’s Gospel when our Lord was twelve years old and Whose whereabouts were unknown to His parents for three days. Then the Blessed Virgin Mary was in a panic. Here she is calm. Even after He says that her concern is of no concern to Him, because His hour had not yet come, she simply tells the servants to do whatever He commands them to do.

It is necessary at this point to establish the timeline of the Apostle and Evangelist St. John’s Gospel. Just as the Boy + Jesus was in the temple three days, before being found. We are told that this wedding in Cana happened “On the Third Day.” Well, on the third day of what? What happened three days ago? This is the third day after our Lord’s Holy Baptism. Just three days removed from St. John the Baptist proclaiming our Lord + Jesus to be the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Just three days from the Voice of the heavenly Father proclaiming that this Man + Jesus was His Beloved Son, in Whom He was well-pleased. Just three days after the Holy Ghost descending and resting upon Him in the form of a dove. Over the course of the next two days, our Lord + Jesus called Sts. John and James, Simon Peter and Andrew, and Philip and Nathaniel to be His disciples. These are the disciples who accompany our Lord to the wedding in Cana. This is the timeline according to the Apostle and Evangelist St. John.

Therefore, according to these events, it would appear that His hour had come. He would certainly need to endure the temptation of the devil in the wilderness after fasting for forty days still, but He has already been baptized and started to call His disciples. So, without much further ado, the Lord commands the servants to fill the jars used for purification with water to the brim. Each jar contained about two or three firkins, and there were six of them. A firkin is a unit of measure equaling nine gallons or thirty-four liters. By my math that is fifty-four gallons total that these six jars hold.

They were next instructed to take some of the water in the jars to the master of the feast. The water had been turned into wine. And not just any wine, but the best wine the master of the feast had tasted. It was truly a wonderful gift from the Lord and Creator of Heaven and Earth. At His Word the water had become wine. He did not wave His hand over it or place His hand in it. He simply gave instructions to draw some water out of the jars and give it to the host. The host received the best of any wine he could receive.

This is certainly a great miracle in and of itself. But the most remarkable thing about this narrative is the allusions that are inherent in it. The Apostle and Evangelist St. John in his Gospel is more concerned with making theological statements than with accurate historical timelines. And there are a couple of things to make note of from this Gospel. The first is that the same elements that are talked about at the end of our dear Lord's life and ministry, are the same elements used in today's Gospel. Both water and wine are mentioned. Water has found its use among us in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Wine finds its use among us in the Sacrament of the Altar. There the wine is united to the Blood of our dear Lord Christ for the forgiveness, life, and salvation for all Christians who eat and drink His Body and Blood in, with, and under the bread and wine in faith and in worthy fellowship.

Blood and water also flowed from the precious Savior's side after His death on the tree of the holy cross, signifying that all Christians are saved through water and blood. Here at the wedding in Cana is signified that all Christians are saved through water and wine; through Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. All those who participate in these Sacraments and who believe that they receive the gifts freely offered, receive such gifts from our dear Lord + Jesus, the Christ.

This wedding in Cana happened on the third day. On the third day after our Lord's death on the tree of the holy cross, He arose from the dead. His resurrection gives us confidence that we too will on the Last Day be raised with all believers in Christ and be given new, glorious, heavenly bodies, and we will get to live with our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ, and all the saints for all eternity.

The Lord + Jesus gave the wedding couple a great gift that day. He gave them the good wine. Our dear Lord gives to all of us who commune in faith, and worthily in pure fellowship with one another, the good wine, too. In fact, we receive the best wine. For we receive not just the wine, but we receive our Lord's Blood; the Blood He shed on the tree of the holy cross to redeem us poor, miserable sinners from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Whenever we eat His Body and drink His Blood in bread and wine, we remember His sacrifice, and receive the gifts that He won on the cross for us.

We are also united to Him and all those with whom we commune in fellowship into a bond of love. The same bond of love that exists between husband and wife. Just as husband and wife are joined together as one in holy matrimony, in the Blessed Sacrament all of us who commune together in pure fellowship are united with one another in the Church. We receive fervent love for our God and for each other.

Just as the Blessed Virgin Mary gave command to the servants of the wedding feast to do whatever the Lord + Jesus commanded them to do, so too do the servants of Holy Mother Church. The Ministers of the Word are commanded to preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and administer the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. In so doing they distribute the gifts of the Lord + Jesus

to all those who receive them in faith. The Ministers of the Word hand out freely forgiveness, life, and salvation to all those who would receive them. These gifts are for us. Let us cling to them as we would any good promise given to us.

For, the Good Wine is before us. Our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, is the Good Wine. He gives of Himself so that we may be well-drunk of the Holy Ghost, and filled with the Spirit of love and mutual admiration for the heavenly Father and for our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Therefore, my dear friends, let us come and receive the Good Wine. Let us hear His Word. Let us rejoice that He has washed us with the purifying water of Holy Baptism, so that our sins are drowned, and we now live as a new creation robed with the righteousness of the Christ. Let us hear His Absolution, His forgiveness, spoken by His servant that buries once again our sins in our Holy Baptism, and prepares us to receive His Body and Blood in bread and wine, to strengthen our faith, and fill us with His love. All this He does for us, so that we might have a wonderful gift, and be led into our eternal home in Heaven. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, 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!