

January 17, 2010 John 2:1-11; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Cor 12:1-11; Isaiah 62:1-5

Celebration – the JK wedding entrance dance video (5 minutes long)

How many of you have seen the JK wedding entrance dance on You Tube?

It has been viewed by millions of people. I don't usually watch a lot of things on You Tube, but after hearing an interview with the couple on the TODAY show and hearing how they were surprised by how many people were viewing the video, I had to watch it. And I love it! I love that it's a joyous way to start a wedding. I love the surprise of their family and friends sitting in the pews – seeing them smile and then join in with clapping and a bit of “pew dancing.” I love that it's a celebration and that it's not about how good they are dancing ,but about how much fun/joy that they have on that day. I've even watched it again b/c it's uplifting to see people celebrating life.

There's another wedding celebration and it's happening in our gospel reading today in John 2:1-11 – the wedding at Cana . Jesus is in attendance w/his mother, Mary and the disciples. It must have been quite the celebration b/c the wine ran out (I guess that is poor planning on the part of the wedding party b/c hospitality is such an important thing for a wedding celebration that's going to last several days.) And maybe Mary thinks that the celebration needs to continue and they need to help them out. Her son,

Jesus, can do something about it. She believes that he can even if he thinks that it is not time for him to reveal who he is and what he can do, but maybe God is working through Mary to say that it is time. “Do whatever he tells you.” What kind of faith is that? She doesn’t even know that he will do anything, and yet she says, “Do whatever he tells you.” She knows that he can create and that he can provide, and so, Jesus does.

That first miracle – taking 6 empty stone jars used for purification, filling them with water and turning them into GOOD wine – Jesus taking the common things, the things of the daily life of Jews, and turning it into something extravagant, something amazing – something new is coming.

The stone jars were empty, run out, they had hit bottom – Jesus turns it into something good, revealing something new, something better than before. Jesus had revealed his glory and the disciples believed. The celebration could continue even after things had been emptied and hit bottom.

Haiti earthquake – It almost seems unreal to be thinking about the celebration stories of these two weddings in light of the earthquake in Haiti. It’s hard to picture the spontaneous dancing of the JK wedding entrance dance and the rejoicing of the good wine coming from empty jars filled with water when the fate of thousands of people rests on them receiving clean

water and medical help. And yet, as believers in a God who brings miracles among those whose jars have emptied and hit bottom, we know that we can still celebrate out of the love of God who brought us Christ who brings us to use our gifts for those who are so desperately in need.

Amidst all of the devastation of the Haiti earthquake, in the search for missing loved ones, amongst the destroyed hospitals and homes, the broken bones, the head injuries and the dead bodies – a spontaneous worship service erupted on the side of the road in the dark– singing and praying ! How can that be? Here is a people in one of the poorest countries of the world where things were not good prior to the earthquake and are even worse after the earthquake – how could they be singing? Those gathered at the side of the road know something. They know that they are not alone. They know that a God who loves them promises to be with them when they have hit the bottom and the jars are empty. They pray with a God who can provide miracles and turn ordinary, common things into extraordinary promises. It is a glimmer of hope in a world gone dark, in a world overturned by chaos.

In the wedding stories of celebration, there is joy in dancing. We don't have to burst into dancing in order to show our joy in the midst of things because Jesus brings joy that extends beyond dancing – a joy that is at the very heart of our being – a joy that penetrates the darkness of a Haitian

night pierced by the cries of those who suffer, for Jesus is there among them in the hands that reach out to pull another miracle out of the rubble. Jesus is there in the medical staff, the doctors, nurses, and volunteers who set up triage in any open areas that they can find. Jesus is there in those who share what little clean water and clothing that they can find. Jesus is there in the hands around the world that fold together in prayer to lift up those who need to hear Christ's hope.

That hope and celebration is also offered to you who feel like you have hit bottom or are running on empty. For Jesus takes those common elements, bread and wine, and turns them into something new for you. He wants you to have hope. He wants you to have forgiveness. He wants you to have new life, so he turns those simple things into a miracle. For in that bread and that wine that you will eat and drink, you receive, once again, the joy and celebration of a God who loves you beyond the darkness and offers a glimmer of the new life to come.

And for that reason only, we can continue to dance in the joy and celebration of Christ. Amen