

Coffee To Go | Second Sunday After Epiphany | Year C

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Karin Peter, Blake Smith

Karin Peter 00:26

Welcome to Coffee to Go where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you in the journey. So, we are on the second Sunday after Epiphany. And Epiphany means to reveal or to make known. And the season after Epiphany, which lasts from January 7 to Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, is this period of time where we learn more of the light and love of God that is revealed in Jesus Christ. So, this week, we are at a wedding, and it must have been someone in Jesus' family group of some kind, as his mother was there, and she's acting in some kind of matriarchal role, or maybe motherly controlling mode, we might say, but, but she seems to have some capacity of leadership in this scripture. And it turns out, there's a bit of a problem, and as many mothers do, she sets out to set it right. So let's hear...

Blake Smith 01:37

Our scripture today comes from the Gospel According to John, the second chapter, the 1st through the 11th verse, and it is the Wedding at Cana.

On the third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "they have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, What concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now, standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rights of purification, each holding 20 or 30 gallons. And Jesus said to them, "fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now, draw some out and take it to the person in charge of the banquet." So they took it. When the person in charge tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew, that person called the bridegroom and said to him, everyone serves the good wine first and then the inferior wine after. The guests have become drunk, but you have kept the good wine until now. Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed His glory, and his disciples believed in him.

So why does this matter? Well, as the passage says, This is the first of his signs, it's his first miracle or act that demonstrates that he has power beyond human norms. But perhaps more importantly, and this is another one of those things that kind of lays underneath the scripture that we can easily miss, is that

it is also an act of justice. And you might say, How in the world is it an act of justice? Well, while the host would have been shamed, in this case, to have run out of wine in such an auspicious occasion, it would have been the lower orders, the household stewards, the servants, those who were less than they, would be the ones that would be blamed if there wasn't enough wine. And here, Jesus offers an act of salvation for those household servants at his mother's request, is important to note. So, he provides this, and it actually probably is more in service to those who are of the lower order than it is to the hosts of the party. So, he does this somewhat out of probably the insistent, the insistence of his mother, because he was obedient. We talked about that earlier when he was found in the temple at 12. But also because, as is evident throughout the scriptures, he really had a concern for those who were oppressed and who are of what we might consider a lower caste. It's a bit of a preview of Jesus' role acting in a purpose of salvation for all at God's request or in God's greater story. And it fits into the season of Epiphany, because it's a revelation of the Divine One who serves or acts on behalf of others.

Karin Peter 05:18

So Blake, you know that this is one of my favorite passages, because of Jesus's mother. So I honestly read this, and believe that we can see where Jesus gets his little bit of snarky attitude that he has. Periodically it shows up in the Gospel stories. So, his mother comes to him, obviously wanting him to fix this, and he does a typical adult son behavior towards a mother's request of, why are you coming to me? This is not my problem. And his mother, and this is my favorite, my favorite part, she completely ignores his response. She completely ignores his, 'This is not my problem. Leave me alone,' kind of attitude, and she simply turns to the servants and says, Do what, whatever he asked. In other words, she was so confident that he would follow her request or honor her request, or we could even say, be an obedient son that she didn't even bother to respond to his kind of retort that he gave her. And I can see her kind of narrowing her eyes and looking at him, deciding if that comment was even worth a reply, and deciding No, and just turning to the servants and, you know, saying, Do what he says, and walking away knowing that what she wanted would be done. And I can even sense the frustration Jesus has as an adult son, thinking, Oh, and then turning around and actually making it happen, or rolling his eyes as she walks away. Of the other things our adult children do when we are so absurd to them and and part of that lives in this story a little bit, and I'm grateful that it does, because we tend to homogenize these stories of Jesus, and we flatten them out, and we take all the human interaction out of them. And in this particular story, I like to put that that back in a little bit from the perspective of a of a parent.

Blake Smith 07:28

So, two quick things I want to get this clear. Are you saying that the Holy Mother was snarky?

Karin Peter 07:35

I'm saying that's definitely the gift that she gave to Jesus, because we see him snark a little bit as well.

Blake Smith 07:45

Absolutely, absolutely, I I just can't believe she didn't slap him when he's like, 'woman,' because I think about me at 30 if I had said that to my mother when she was still capable of catching me.

Karin Peter 08:01

No, I don't think they were southern. I think they were from Northern Judea. I think that's the deal there.

Blake Smith 08:06

That would not have happened. Now I might jokingly say it now, because I know she can't catch me, but certainly not at, certainly not at 30. Well, some questions we might ask, given all of that, is, when have I been unfairly blamed for someone else's actions? And here we're talking about those servants who would have taken the blame. So when have I been unfairly blamed for someone else's actions, or when have I blamed someone else unfairly and how are these injustices reconciled? And second, in what ways am I willing to act on another's behalf, even if it's at the request or the stern suggestion of my mother? I Yeah.

Karin Peter 09:00

It's really interesting is if we froze time after she said they don't have any more wine, if we just freeze frame that right there, what's going through everybody's mind? You know, what am I willing to do, yeah, to fix this situation? Yeah, yeah. So let's live in that for this week. Let's experience that this week, and let's notice others, especially those who serve. So we know it would have been the servers, which would have been servants and slaves and other House members. So let's notice the servers in our life and the assistants, the fast food workers, the clerks, the lawn care workers, the custodians, who, who, who do all of these service jobs that intersect with our life and take a moment to smile or offer a kind word or a greeting or even for. The wave, because each of these actions tell someone that they've been noticed, that their service matters. So let's live in that this week.

Blake Smith 10:12

Yeah, that's wonderful. One of the greatest lessons that I learned in my year of travel, excuse me, with Up with People... our cast was in Portugal for a period of time, and one of my host dads, we would call them that, one of my host dads was a garbage collector, and I remember taking a walk with him one of the nights that we were in his town, and him talking about feeling that he was less than, or at least he was made to feel that way by some. But what would happen? He knew what would happen if he didn't do his job. Then he might become more important to a few other people. So, I mean, that was a, that was a moment I had never thought of that kind of thing, and so have since, I'd like to believe at least, I've paid a lot more attention to the custodians and the garbage collectors and the waiters and all of those who make our life, not only easier, but livable in some cases. So, anyway, so thanks for that.

Well, our blessing today, again, comes from Kate Bowler, and it is called, "For the Ones Who Bear Witness."

Blessed are the noticers, the ones who see the story in its fullness.

Blessed are the attenders, the witness bearers, the story holders, the ones who tiptoe to the edge right alongside us, knowing that the very act will break their heart in pieces too, but choosing us anyway.

Blessed are those who are amazed by a life lived in its fragility, in its brevity, in its beauty.

Blessed are the ones who stand close enough to say,

Behold, behold, this is their love.

Behold, this is their annoying habit.

Behold, these are the people they loved and know so much about that they could implicate or exonerate them in a crime.

Behold, these are their exes and their favorite songs to belt out in the car and their fast food orders.

Behold, this is not a problem to be solved. This is a person to be loved.

This is the miracle we get to call by name and how lucky are we?

These people, these loves, these precious, precious, precious days.

Thanks be to God. Amen. Amen.

Well, thanks for joining us here at Coffee to Go. We invite you to join us next time at Coffee to Go for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.