

2nd Sunday Homily , C Cycle, 2016

Have you heard about the new Starwars movie, The Force Awakens

- It is the highest opening week gross profits than any other movie of all time
- Wikopedia describes it as an epic, space, opera, film
- It take you to places you have never been.
- Out of this world!
- Two more sequels planned in 2017 and 2019.

Starwars gives depth and breadth to movie-going.

For me, today's gospel is like a new Starwars movie.

The passage comes from John's Gospel which starts with a rolling out of the grand view of life: "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God." It is this great vision that all things which were created came from the word. And then this word became flesh and pitched his tent in our midst. It is this great Word which shows up in today's gospel passage at the wedding feast.

On the surface it is simply a story about a wedding feast at which the wine runs out. But on closer observation, it tells an epic story, one which is greater than Starwars.

It confronts a core challenge of human life: What should do when the wine of life runs out?

- **Dreary winter days ...**
- **Financial crises in our lives**
 - **10% drop in the dow Industrial average**
 - **facing foreclosure on the house;**
 - **possible repossession of your car**
 - **not enough funds to buy food at the end of each month**
- **the break up of key relationships in our lives**
- **Flunking out of school**

Yes, it is a VERY sad day when the wine of joy runs out of our lives. And so it is a sad day in today's gospel.

The story begins with “the Mother of Jesus is invited to a wedding feast. Note: Mary is not named; only that she is the mother of Jesus. Scripture scholars tell us that the term “Mother” links Mary with the mother of all humanity. She is the leading actor in this story. We are told, almost as an afterthought that Jesus and his disciples also attended.

Then comes the bad news: the wine runs out. Here is the main challenge of the story: What do we do in life when the wine of joy runs out: it doesn't matter whether we are challenged as a person or a family or a city or a nation. Things which we plan on our own will

some place long the line, no matter how much we plan, will go haywire. We will face a crisis. We just can't make it on our own.

Here we see Mary pictured in John's gospel as the mother of all humanity putting it quite simply: The wine has run out, the party is about to turn sour, all the wedding plans are about to go kaput!

Notice what the Mother does. She turns towards Jesus and says, "They have no more wine." Mother realizes she needs to do something but that she can't do it on her own.

As someone once told me, "You have to do it on your own, but you do not have to do it alone." I would rephrase that statement to say, "You have to do it on your own, but you CANNOT do it alone." The mother of all humanity realizes that she needs to look to Jesus to find a way to have joy return to the wedding feast of life.

Son, they have no more wine!

Jesus' response to her seems quite harsh. "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." Here is the mother of all humanity asking Jesus to return joy to life and he is babbling about

some hour of his not yet here. What is he talking about? Jesus is involving himself in the epic story begun in the Garden of Eden, that story about man and woman trying to find joy by separating themselves from God...by trying to do things on their own.

But Jesus, who has embedded himself into our humanity tells us that the only way he can return joy back into humanity's heart, the only way to get the wedding party back on track is to come to his hour. "My hour has not yet come!", he says. In the Gospel of John, "his hour" clearly refers to his life saving death on the cross. He is saying to the mother of humanity... and to all of us who are her offspring... that the only way to enter into constant joy in life is through suffering, dying and rising.

Remember what Jesus says in John 4:16 "I am the way and the truth and the life." And again in John 10:10 "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full."

Life is not simply about performing miracles to get rid of problems. If it were, would not our big lotto winners be the happiest people in the world? Yet they often have tragic endings. No fullness of life comes

from pouring oneself out in service of others. That's what dying and rising is all about.

But we want to do life our way. We follow the same epic pattern as Adam and Eve who tried to find happiness all on their own. Just as with Adam and Eve, we want success, we want power, we want wealth, we want good relationships. But how do we find them?

The Mother of Jesus and of all humanity tells us. "Do whatever he tells you." "Follow me" Come with me to my hour and I will welcome you to fullness of life.

"Unless a grain of wheat dies it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

On Monday we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man of the gospel who poured himself out in service to others. It led him first to the mountain of prayer with God and then to glory.

Saturday, in remembrance of Dr. King, '14 of our youth and their advisors spent the day in service of those in need in the Cass Corridor.

They are coming to know the joy which no one can take away from them.

That is why we are involved in a Haiti Mission Outreach, Reach Mission Trips

in neighborhood:

establishing O'Hair Park Community Association, Reach Mission Trips, Northwest Detroit Youth Coalition, New Hope Non Profit Housing Community Organization.

Jesus is telling that life is much more than turning water into wine. That's easy, he says. Life is about finding the very source of joy and tapping directly into it. The source of our joy is realizing how much the Lord has done for us. The source of our joy is all about the outpouring of your life for others.

The servants in today's story follow the mother's instructions: They do whatever Jesus asks of them. And once they do, joy in abundance returns to the party.

My brothers and sisters, we gather here today a great epic banquet. We gather for a wedding feast of the lamb. We gather with wine often running out of our lives. We come to be refreshed, renewed, reminded of God's love for us poured out in his Son. This is my body given for you; this is my blood poured out for you. If you wish to have life and have it abundantly, follow me and pour out your life in service

**to others. Then and only then will you come to the hour of celebration
which will never end.**