

Epiphany 2 C
St. John 2:1-11
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St. George's Bolton
Fr. Chris

Don't Be Afraid to Ask God

The story is told of a new bit of fractured Biblical scholarship that discovered a new twist to the story of the stoning of the woman who committed adultery. You may remember that Jesus challenged those who stood around condemning the woman with taunts, who were ready to stone her to death. Jesus then said, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.' The bystanders looked down, knowing Jesus had spoken a truth. [Now here's the newly discovered piece of Biblical scholarship, following the remark about him who is without sin casting the first stone...]
'Just then, Jesus felt the clonk of a stone hitting his head. He turned and looked around behind him and exclaimed, ' Mother, what are you doing here!'

From today's Gospel: *"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."*

Leave it to Mom to make her boy show what he can do! All mothers are proud of their children, and there is no doubt that Mary was proud of hers. But there is more afoot here than simple maternal pride, isn't there?

We might assume that this incident takes place after His Baptism in the river Jordan and that He is in the early stages of His ministry, perhaps recruiting some of His faithful disciples who will follow Him throughout His ministry. For some reason, He does not feel He is ready to go "public" with His power and authority,

revealing it to the assembled guests, and perhaps this is because this is a light, happy event, a wedding feast, populated by many who have become inebriated from drinking the wine which now is exhausted. Hence the appeal to Jesus over what appears to be a *trivial occasion* for an unimportant purpose that should not require the help of God incarnate.

This raises the question, *is any prayer too trivial to pray?* Do we dare ask God for help, even for the minor daily situations which bedevil us?

In St. Matthew 6 it says, *"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. **Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.**"*

Let me repeat that: *"Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him!"*

I know that sometimes, no many times I am reluctant to pray for something I consider is trivial. I do not want to waste the time and attention of the God of the whole universe on the needs of little me. And yet, if it is of consequence to me, **God already knows that I need help**, and I should lay it down before God and ask for that help and guidance. God desires that we be dependent upon God, and not see ourselves as *"independent"* of God. Rather, we are to come to an awareness of just how dependent we are upon God. Our independence is an illusion. Every breath we take is

but by the Grace and generosity of God. Unfortunately, it is easy to lose sight of this and forget just how fragile and dependent our lives are upon God.

It would seem the answer is to let God decide how trivial the need truly is. That is exactly what happened in today's Gospel passage: Mary expressed the need and encouraged Jesus to resolve it. Jesus revealed that He would weigh and balance what was appropriate to do in this situation. Then God acted.

God is more than willing to help us. No matter that we are but a tiny grain or spec of sand on a huge beach, God does care about each of us individually. We are not inconsequential to God. Rather, we are of great consequence. God cares deeply for each of us. Nothing about us is trivial to the one who loves us.

Mary not only is encouraging Jesus to reveal Himself, but she is also showing that what may appear trivial on the surface, may not be so trivial to God. Ask, and let God decide. Ask and you shall receive. Be careful what you ask for, because you just might receive it. You may not always receive what you ask for, but in God's wisdom, God will always answer your prayers. Count on it.

The act of asking in prayer demonstrates our faith and belief in God and in God's power to resolve the problems which confront us. God cared for His host, the guests and the bride and groom. It turned out not to be so small and inconsequential a matter. It is an event that has been remembered down through the ages each time this story is retold, and so it also reveals the generosity and power of God.

And in asking, we afford God an opportunity to show God's love and power to us and others in our lives. And only God can change water into wine: either by the rains which water the vineyards or in a cask at a wedding feast! AMEN.