

Homily: 2nd Sunday: Cycle C: 2016: Is 62: 1-5; Ps 96; 1 Corth 12: 4-11; Jn 2:1-11
“Do Whatever He tells You”

As we now move back into the “ordinary time” of the Church’s liturgical calendar, we are called to put the mysteries of Faith that we celebrated during the beautiful season of Advent and Christmas into practice in our daily “ordinary” lives.

1. **Today we ponder the great role of Mary in salvation history.** Just as she was the one who by saying yes to God in the mystery of the Annunciation gave the eternal Son of God His human nature and bought Him into our world, today she is the one who asks Him in love to perform His first miracle, which begins the public dimension of His work of Redeeming the human race from the power of satan, sin and death. Mary’s role is one of intercessor par excellence for the human race until the end of time. She is always associated with Jesus in a most intimate way, as the Second Vatican Council put it, *“By decree of God’s providence she was, here on earth, the noblest of all of His companions, and the humble servant of the Lord. In conceiving Christ, in bearing Him, in nursing Him, in presenting Him to the Father in the temple, in sharing in her Son’s passion as He was dying on the Cross by her obedience, her faith, her hope and burning love, she cooperated, in a way that was quite unique, in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls. She is therefore mother to us in the order of grace (Lumen Gentium, 61-62).* Mary is the human being who most fully participated in Christ’s redemptive act of which we are all called to share in by our prayers, good works of charity, and most of all by daily bearing our cross in love for the ongoing conversion of our heart and for the sake of the salvation of others. What a privilege to share in the mission of the Redeemer in company with our Lady!
2. Moving on to today’s Gospel passage, Jesus mysteriously says to Mary in protest when asked by her to work a miracle for the newly married couple, *“Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.”* Is Jesus being disrespectful in calling her “woman” instead of mother? Well, the answer is no. There are some profoundly deep mysteries going on here. What is Christ’s

“**hour**”? It is mystical reality of Jesus moving in a definitive way toward His passion, death and Resurrection - the time (hour) for beginning His public mission, given to Him by the Father, of redeeming the human race. **Cana is a rehearsal for Golgotha** (the hill of the Cross): that is why Christ in His human nature initially shrinks from it. Suffering is not pleasant, especially the immense suffering Jesus is going to take on for our Redemption (all of our sins and their awful effects). Why does Jesus call her “**woman**” instead of Mother? Again there is a deep meaning behind this. The other time in Scripture where the “woman” is addressed by God is in the beginning of the book of Genesis, namely the first woman: Eve. **Jesus by calling Mary “Woman” is in essence calling her the “New Eve” as He is the “New Adam”**; for the beginning of the Redemption of the human race by this public miracle is **the sign** that God is giving the human race **one final chance**, and wants to create a new humanity in the person of Jesus, with Mary’s special cooperation in this whole process. Mary is now going from being Jesus’s mother, strictly speaking, to becoming the universal spiritual mother of the human race - which is completed on the Cross when Jesus entrusted the human race to her in the person of St. John the Evangelist representing all of us. Jesus says to her, when seeing her there with the disciple St. John, “**Woman there is your son.**” At that moment the human race for all time was entrusted to the maternal care of Mary. And in turn he says to St. John and us in turn, “**There is your Mother.**” The Gospel says “*From that hour onward, the disciple took her into his care*” (see **John 19:26-27**). An essential question arises from that reality: **do we have a special place for her in our heart and our spiritual life?**

3. Mary says to the waiters at the wedding and to us always, “**Do whatever He tells you.**” The message from our Lady is: Jesus alone is the one who can save us from sin, from the devil, from ourselves in our fallen nature, and from death! “**Do whatever He tells you.**” This obedience of love is the narrow path that leads to salvation (which Mary exemplified in her own life). Yes, through **the teaching of our Catholic Faith** we are given the knowledge to follow Jesus in a definitive way. Jesus has shown us the path, at the encouragement of Mary to enter into His

“Hour” to be the Savior of us sinners; now He gives us the grace to follow on it through the ongoing intercession of Our Blessed Mother for us sinners in this vale of tears. **She is truly the refuge of sinners for all eternity.** The miracle of Jesus at the wedding in Cana of turning the water into wine will be taken to a deeper level in **the miracle of the Eucharist** when the wine is turned into Jesus’s own blood for the salvation of the many, until He comes again at the end of the world. **It all ties together, like a divine symphony - the mysteries of Faith! These are the last words of Mary in all of Scripture, “Do whatever He tells you.” Doesn’t that summarize what our Catholic Faith is all about?** As the Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen points out in his profound book: *Life of Christ*, another helpful reality to ponder is the contrast between the obedient handmaid of the Lord: Mary, and the proud fallen angel: satan in relation to Jesus. *Satan tried to tempt Jesus away from His redemptive death in the desert, Mary encourages (tempts) Jesus to enter on the path to His death at Cana; satan tries repeatedly to tempt Jesus away from embracing the Cross; Mary encourages (tempts) Jesus to enter into the “hour” that will lead to the Cross, which will lead to the Redemption of the human race; satan tries to tempt Jesus **and us** to take the pleasure first (the feast before the fast), which will lead to ultimate spiritual death, but Mary encourages Christ to counter the evil one by showing us we need to embrace the Cross first, the fast, which will lead to the Resurrection, the ultimate feast in God’s love. Truly Mary is the woman prophesied by God the Father in the beginning of Genesis who will crush the head of the devil through her offspring (Jesus), as it is stated, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel”(Gen 3:15). Mary is the New Eve who tells us how we can become a new creation in Christ, “Do whatever He tells you.” May we respond with love and obedience to her command: **to listen to Jesus**, each and every day of our earthly pilgrimage in this vale of tears - which if we persevere in faith, in God’s grace, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and through her prayers as our spiritual mother, will someday will lead us to the glory of the Resurrection in the eternal Feast of Heaven, to peace and joy and love beyond our imagining. God bless you.*