

It was another week of Q&A with students. I had two sessions with the middle school kids and one with 2nd graders in CRE. I enjoy these sessions because the questions asked give me insight into their minds; their worries and their ideas. Apparently some are fascinated with the type of cheese I prefer. The middle school kids asked some good and deeper questions, but a few easy ones - my favorite ice cream is chocolate, the reason I don't like pineapple on pizza is because it is an objectively moral evil to do so (just kidding). A deeper one; why do bad things happen? We had a great talk on that one, but then there was the follow up..."Why doesn't God do something about the bad things?"

The goal of marriage comes down to holiness, which is the goal of everyone. A covenantal marriage between the husband and wife means they commit to support one another and walk with each other so as to become the best versions of themselves, as God created us. A covenantal, sacramental marriage is the way each partner becomes more open to love, to give love to others and to accept love; not just open but empowered by God to love.

Clearly our world, our community needs more people to be open to love, and to use that charity of love, that agape, to improve the world around us. This is why we as Catholics place emphasis on marriage. We are God's way of doing something about the badness in our world.

This wedding scene at Cana is very deceptive and in a good way too. We think we are at a wedding but we are also at Jesus' crucifixion. John's gospel tells us these two events, the one at the beginning of Jesus' ministry and THE Salvific act at the end are connected and the Cana event supplies the meaning of Jesus' paschal mystery.

What is going on? Jesus is at a wedding and a potential scandal is brewing; the wine is running out. This would bring shame to the groom's family. (Read into this-humanity's potential scandal).

Jesus' mother (who is never named) urges Jesus to do something; and his answer is odd. This is not the appropriate moment, not his hour. So this action he will take is not his supreme sign of God, but one that will lead to it, for his true Hour will be as he willingly dies on the cross.

Yet Jesus does take action. The scandal is averted; and huge portions of high quality wine are offered to the guests.

Consider Jesus on the cross, as John will depict it. His mother will be there as well, this time without words. Jesus tells her to behold him, a point that THIS is the hour, not back at Cana.

Jesus thirsts and he is given poor quality wine on a stick; whereas he gives to this wedding wonderful wine and a tremendous amount.

The scandal will be him dying on a cross. A death marked for the lowest of lows. And he too will change the scandal to Glory.

And what does Jesus accomplish on the Cross? He completes the union of God and Humanity, the wedding of the divine and the created; between us and God. Jesus reveals that there is nothing that separates us from God, not even our sinfulness. We are wedded to God; our only response is to live it. Our shame, our sinfulness will be forgiven by God's overabundance of grace.

And that union of God, which we signify in baptism, empowers us to act as one with God.

Jesus will show us how God acts: with mercy and kindness, with generosity and patience; God acts with healing, with compassion, with forgiveness to restore people, us.

We, one with God, and intentionally living this marriage with God through our Baptism and our Eucharist, then are empowered to act in the same way.

God acts on the evil, the badness, the needs in this world, in us, with us. Through us.

The answer to evil, suffering in this world, is our acts of mercy, kindness, generosity, patience. We are meant to heal, to forgive, to live with love.

Like in any healthy marriage, responsibility is shared by both couples. One does not just get to sit on the couch, drink beer or wine, watch tv. Both husband and wife work together for the good of the household, the family.

So it is with us and God.

These past weeks we have seen people doing amazing things for those in need in Los Angeles; donating money, serving food, providing shelter. And ironically some of the richest men in the world have done nothing, but that is another homily.

We see efforts here in our own community to help others. Clearly through Catholic Charities, the Reno Sparks Gospel mission, et al.

And this past week the school students took up a collection to help a family, not of this school, as a child deals with brain cancer.

This is us as a community taking action to address the badness in our world.

It is also in those smaller moments that don't make the news or social media, when we act and choose to work on reconciliation with someone we have hurt or hurt us; when we listened to someone spill out their soul to us and we did not judge; when we welcomed someone into our community here.

This is us personally responding to God's love by giving love to others.

Our oneness with God, our covenantal relationship with God empowers so much love within us, not for our sake, but for the salvation of this world.

A relationship and a responsibility renewed each Sunday in the Eucharist, when we commune as a community with God; to restore those bonds between us and God, and each other; to open ourselves to that Grace of God that is to be overflowing-ly poured into our very being.

So yes, there is badness, there is hurt and pain in our world. God does do something about it; with us and through us.