

Maybe you remember this show in the seventies: Bewitched.  
It was kind of a stupid show.

There was this woman, Samantha,  
who was actually a powerful witch  
but she falls in love and marries with an ordinary guy.  
And as they marry, they agree that she should not use her superpowers  
- like getting the cleaning done by a simple twitching of her nose -  
so her husband wouldn't feel like a failure,  
and he could actually provide for her and give her  
the perfect life of the perfect suburban housewife.

Of course, there is a problem because the mother in law, who is also a powerful witch,  
does not agree with that.

She wants her daughter to live to the full of her potential.

And so the comical plot is basically the same each time:

The mother in law popping up from nowhere into Samantha's house,  
nudging her into using her superpowers,  
making all the craziest things happen in the tidy neighborhood.

Each time, Samantha gets it all worked out – of course -

and by the time the “beloved yet not that smart” husband comes back from the office,  
everything is back to normal again.

Well, I don't know about all of that but I remember clearly that as a child  
what I got out of it was that I would not let anyone preventing me from using my superpowers  
– had I any -  
and this, even for the sake of living the perfect suburban life.

*If you have powers, you have to use them.*

I get we get that. Children get that. Mothers get that.

Mary got that, too.

For the love of mortals,

in Jesus, God decides to become mortal, to live the perfect Galilean life.

Yet, someone is not really happy with Jesus's plans as they seem to unfold so far:  
his own mother.

His mother probably enjoys and respects Jesus's love for mortals and mortal life  
and yet,

it's been thirty years Jesus has been enjoying it.

Today, Mary is nudging him, pleading him,  
to live a little.

To make use of his powers.

As she had to nudge him into taking his first steps, I guess.

As a mother she wants her child to live up to the full of his potential.

For his own sake,

For the sake of others, too.

*You need to use your power*

How about that?

**Sunday, January 17 / 2<sup>nd</sup> Epiphany**  
**Isaiah 62:1-5, 1Co12:1-11, John 2:1-11**  
**The Rev. Fanny Belanger**

Because we all have read the Gospel,  
we know that Jesus had superpowers, kind of.  
And he probably knew it too, even before using them.  
The water turned into wine at Cana is the first miracle recorded in John – true -  
But at the end of the first Chapter, right before this story  
Jesus says to one of his disciples that he will:  
“see heaven opened and the angels of God  
ascending and descending upon the Son of Man”.  
I wonder what were Jesus's beliefs about his own powers.  
If he believed it was not the right time, the right place to use them yet.  
Or maybe he still had to identify with the Son of Man – as some theologians assume.  
What I know is that as Christians we have a lot of misconceptions about our own powers,  
because in our world we made  
Power a synonym of violence and domination  
or – in the best case – of competition and greediness.

Yet in Greek, power does not mean anything else than capacity, ability.  
The ability you have to do something  
because of who you really are, of your own being.  
Power is something inside you that causes you to become who you really are.  
Aristotle used to point out to animals to explain this.  
He said: Animals enjoy being what they are,  
and what they can do.  
That's the reason why they are so playful  
They enjoy their abilities: running, jumping, biting, hunting.  
Well, you just have to watch a squirrel for five minutes to get it.  
Aristotle said that it was the same for us.  
Of course it's not only about our body, it is also about our mind, and it is also about our soul, our heart.  
We have to enjoy the being we are and to live up to the full of its ability.

Living to the full,  
that's the sign of the wine we have in our Gospel lesson.  
It's surprising how often we forget about it  
How we got used to  
Jesus saying that he is *the bread of life*  
but we almost never hear  
when he says  
*I am the wine of life* – as he says today.

Jesus is in the ordinary, yes, but he is also in the extraordinary  
That's what Mary got right away.  
Jesus is in the ordinary, not to enjoy the ordinary,  
but to turn it into something else, without much rumble, without much noise,  
bringing life at the table, inviting God at the party, in the midst of us.

I think there are three main themes we can link with the sign of the wine: Joy, desire and generosity.  
The thing is  
Most of the time, in our lives we run out of wine, right?

We run out of wine.  
It does not only happen to married couples:  
to run out of joy, out of desire and out of generosity  
because, sometimes along the way,  
they were too busy to be still in love.  
Running out of wine, it happens all the time, to all of us.

Have you seen the well-called movie “Joy”?  
This woman reads to her daughter the story about the cicada that has been hibernating for 17 years  
and she starts crying because she realizes  
She is the cicada.  
She is not living up to the full of her potential, at some point she buried her talents into the ground.  
She has denied her superpowers and she is missing it,  
but most of all:  
The world is missing it.  
We need to use our potential, not for our own sake,  
but for the sake of the on going party,  
of all of us around in need of the things only us can make happen.

We need to use our potential and we need to start doing something,  
anything,  
as Jesus starts with what is at hand: empty vessels.  
Empty vessels  
as we all are.  
Although we may feel empty, exhausted,  
God wants to use us.  
I know we keep on saying we are in a society where we have way too many desires  
But seriously what kind of society it is where what people get excited about is the new iphone?  
I think in our society, we try to get excited, but  
we do too much and we try to live the perfect life  
and we lose our great desire for life  
when we should only try to be our powerful self,  
to be just who we are.  
To become truly this amazing being we already are, like the cicada.  
Maybe society or family or job won't allow it  
But God will allow it, in the midst of it all.

Because it's not about getting more power for ourselves, using God to fulfill our own agendas,  
as some televangelists try to make us believe.  
It's about switching from being served to serving  
as Jesus did on this day at Cana.  
In John's, Jesus's first public sign is a mirror  
of his last public action  
when he will leave the table to wash his disciples' feet.

As Christians, when we are fed, we also need to leave the table  
– to leave the altar -  
to go in the world to love and serve the Lord  
in peace but also: in joy, desire, and generosity.

You see, we are not going to change the world with our morals or our theories or even with our liturgy.

We are going to change the world with our desire  
with our joy, with our generosity in the Spirit  
all these gifts of services that Paul is speaking about today.  
As Jesus turned the world upside down with his love for people,  
*we are going to change the world with our desire. God's desire.*

As our first reading in Isaiah clues us in, the true fiances aren't  
the bride and the groom.  
it's all about Jesus and Mary  
Jesus, as the Son of God  
Mary, as the daughter of Israel – God getting married with humanity.  
“Woman, what is it that to you and to me?”  
Some translations go: “Woman, what is it between you and me?”  
A question God is asking his people  
since the beginning.  
What is going to happen if we make this covenant with God?  
What is going to happen if we invite God into the hearts of our lives?

We are not going to leave the ordinary but to transform it.  
And to experience the transformation,  
we have to taste it  
As the steward tasted the wine in the story.  
If we're not part of it, like the husband leaving the house in the show,  
we won't see the magic happening behind our backs when we're away.

I was told this beautiful story this past week:  
The gave out Christmas presents to the homeless  
and one of them started walking about the street, lifting his present above his head  
“As one would have done processing with the Gospel”  
observed one of the volunteers.  
That's right. This present was indeed the sign of God's love,  
the gospel, the good news to the poor.  
Lifting it up his present in joy as we  
lift up the Gospel and lift up the cup at church  
- in joy, in exaltation, in desire.  
Can't wait to open it, can't wait to hear it, can't wait to drink it.  
You have to serve to see how the water can be turned into wine downtown, at a Metro station.

The kingdom of God is here,  
it truly is.  
We just need to learn how to see it by living it out.  
It does not have to take time, to be complicated  
We can start with what is at hand:  
Living in a spirit of love and service the empty vessel of ordinary life.  
But we need to be willing to get a little drunk with God's wine.  
It's easy.  
Because it's the best one. Amen.