It may seem strange to look around and still see people whom you may not know or with whom you have never had a class. Given the variety and diversity of majors and degrees this should not be too surprising. More than likely, the one thing that you all share in common is that you have taken TH 109, the first of the two required theology courses. And, even though this course was taught by a variety of teachers with different emphases, no doubt each course covered the nature of God and his son Jesus Christ. Everyone has probably learned that Jesus Christ was fully God and fully human. And, while you may have pondered how these two natures worked, was he 70% divine, 30% human; we stressed with you that at all times he was fully human, fully divine. In fact, we stated that he was like us in all things but sin. Thus, like you, Jesus had to grow in wisdom and in age. Rigorously, he set out to learn the Hebrew Scriptures. They did not come to him magically or through divine inspiration but after a lot of hard work. Likewise, he listened to the great leaders and scholars and even taught them on occasion. And in this evening’s Gospel, he learns that it is time, time for him to begin his public ministry…time for him to put all that he has learned, all that he has prepared, for the good and service of others.

Tonight, a similar dynamic rings true for you. It is your time, time for you to take what you have learned over these last four or so years and put that at the service of others … time for you to share your ministry publically with a world that so desperately needs your gifts and talents.

For his part, in his first “public” act, we see Jesus turns water into wine. So, try topping that! And while no one can or is expected to do the miraculous, let’s take a careful look at what goes on at this wedding feast in Cana.

Water is very, well, ordinary! Wine, on the other hand, is something special, reserved for feasts and celebrations. Its exhilaration provides great blessing. In this miracle, Jesus takes the ordinary and it becomes extraordinary. Thus it should not be surprising to you that our patron, St. Francis de Sales, exhorts us to “Do the ordinary, extraordinarily well.”

Though we believe in the miraculous, we will probably never be called to do the miraculous. Most of us will never need miraculous cures. Yet, if we did, we would certainly pray for them, believing that with God all things are possible. So, why don’t we concentrate on, pray for, the less miraculous, the ordinary and pursue this in our own way?

- for a more gentle, less hostile & violent world
- for a more just & equitable society where everyone has what justice says s/he should enjoy
- for less poverty & disease
- for a better sense of self; a more healthy appreciation of who we are…after all, we are the imago Dei, created in the image and likeness of God
• for a better equanimity of spirit ... getting lost in God by living the presence of the Spirit he left us, striving for that intimacy and union to make real his last prayer on Earth that we may be one as He and the Father are one.

These are ordinary things that we can do extraordinarily by cooperating with the Holy Spirit he gave to us on that first Pentecost whose constant presence we celebrate this Sunday and each Pentecost Sunday. St. Paul tells the Corinthians and us that there are different works of the Spirit but the same God who accomplishes everything. “To each person is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” So, as the wedding feast was an epiphany, a manifestation or revelation of the divine power at work in Jesus, now is your epiphany moment, your time to make known and real the divine power within you.

Human life is good; but the supernatural, the spiritual life, empowered by and with the Holy Spirit, is richer, more flavorful. Tonight, we are taking a cue from Mary and sending you forth. Mary saw a need, a concern. There was no more wine. The bridegroom was frantic. What a catastrophe this would be for the bride! This could be disastrous. And so, Mary intervenes, so as to save the wedding party embarrassment and to allow the guests to party well. She gives that gentle push, so that Jesus can fill up, complete, and address what was lacking. Similarly, we gently push you to address in our world what’s lacking or needed, to replenish and to supply what’s gone dry and empty.

And, look how well Jesus does it! Normally, bridegrooms serve the best wine first and then after his guests have had some to drink, a lesser, inferior wine. I guess it’s the opposite of college life, you know, when you’re younger, poorer, and less sophisticated you drink Natty Ice or Beast; then, as you grow and mature, you drink the finer stuff, the Sam Adams and the like. (This analogy was provided to me courtesy of two nephews who may have had too much experiential knowledge on this matter.)

Jesus not only turns the ordinary water into the most extraordinary wine but does it in superabundance, 120-180 gallons abundance! Similarly, the more you give everything you have, empowered and imbued by the Spirit, the divine presence within, the more you will find that what you are giving gets better, more flavorful, more exhilarating, becomes a blessing to others and there will still be some left over to give again and again.

At times, we may need others to intervene pushing us to act, to serve. At times, we may ask Mary, our spiritual mother, to intervene on our behalf to her son Jesus in helping us to do so. But as we see in the Gospel, what son can refuse his mother?

However, know well, that in asking Jesus to intervene, there was a danger in letting go, a danger for Jesus because in performing this miracle, he realizes that he begins his hour, his road to the Cross for love of us! Similarly, it’s also Mary’s hour. For thirty years, she has carried in her heart and thoughts the words of Simeon at the Presentation in the Temple, namely that her son would be the rise and fall of many and that Mary, too, would have her heart pierced in pain. Calvary is unfolding for them both, slowly, faithfully, and devoutly.

Mary experiences tension ... the tension of pushing and letting go while perhaps wanting things to stay the same. In intervening, pushing, letting go, she loses Jesus, her longtime support and companion since the death of her husband Joseph. So, Mary opens her heart, prays for the freedom to let him go. The consistently obedient and faithful Mary reechoes the “let it be done to me according to your will” of her Annunciation, at this wedding feast at Cana as she lets Jesus go to begin his public ministry, until her final letting go at Calvary, what De Sales calls the Mount of Lovers, letting him go back to the Father from whom he came.
You may be experiencing that same tension this evening ... of a pushing into a world unfamiliar, and unknown. What lies ahead? How difficult will this be? And while we may not want you to go, we need to do so. In fact we all need to let go ... to trust in God fully and at all times. How?

Mary makes this perfectly clear. It is absolutely amazing to me, almost mind-blowing that in tonight’s Gospel, taken from John’s second chapter of his work, we have the very last words Mary ever speaks exhorting us to ... DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU!

Why need she speak any more? She has said all we need to hear and to do. She, the true and new Ark of the Covenant, who bore the Savior of the world, has pointed others to him and tonight reveals to us the very simple way to follow him, to imitate him, to as we say in Salesian speak to “LIVE JESUS” ... do whatever he tells you!

Class of 2013, It’s time, time to do whatever he tells you:

- When tempted to choose the easy way out ... do whatever he tells you.
- When wanting to quit for the day, yet a neighbor or friend in need comes calling ... do whatever he tells you.
- When desirous to rest, to escape, but your child wants to throw the ball to you for the millionth time ... do whatever he tells you.
- When you want to cheat, to be unfaithful, to shortchange yourself or others, to settle as opposed to excel ... do whatever he tells you.
- When you want to hold back, to protect, to shelter, when you know you need to let go ... do whatever he tells you.

When following Mary’s dictum, mandate, imperative, sage advice, and undeniably foolproof way for “Living Jesus,” we have the help of the Holy Spirit, showing, illuminating, and empowering. We have Mary herself, our spiritual mother, interceding on our behalf. Doing whatever he tells you is the fruit of Mary’s wisdom, the fruit of a life lived in perfect humility and trust in God.

Our first reading tells us that “Resplendent and unfading is wisdom...readily perceived by those who follow her...found by those who seek her.” Is there anything wiser than to follow what Christ tells us?

Driving home last night, I saw a bumper sticker that read “knowledge speaks but wisdom listens.” To do whatever he tells us, requires a listening ... a listening of the heart where Christ speaks most tenderly moving us to love, to forgive, to ask for forgiveness, to be so moved to compassion for another that we forget ourselves. This listening, this communing of our heart with God’s, gives us an intimacy, a peace, an assurance that we are not alone, so that we see our second reading as a blueprint for Christian living:

- Never letting evil talk pass our lips.
- Rather, saying only the good things people need to hear. Things that will really cheer people up.
- Doing nothing that will sadden the Holy Spirit.
- Ridding ourselves of all bitterness, jealousy, hostility, and anger.
- Replacing them with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.

I can’t help think that this is the WHATEVER of do whatever he tells you.

Do you need to impact this world?
Over these last four years, while you were assiduously spending your time in study groups, being tossed out of the library for working too hard or too late,

- Health care has yet to be reformed and proposing dangerous legislation.
- Massacres have happened from Ft. Hood Military base to the Boston Marathon.
- More than 30,000 troops went to Afghanistan.
- Earthquakes destroyed Haiti, then another 10,000 people in Japan two years later.
- We have had Wikileaks, and now IRS issues.
- Car bombings abroad and at home; Egypt riots, leaders fall fueled by Facebook and other Social Media.
- In some areas, there was too much water with floodings and typhoons destroying lives and livelihood.
- While not enough water in east Africa with its worst drought in 20 years, starvation threatening the lives of 3.7 million.
- Tensions continue in North & South Korea while all along more are in need of food.
- Marital infidelity & sexual misconduct in the military, the Church, the sports world, and well just about everywhere.
- The sports world has had its own scandals, from doping, to bountygate, to neglecting sadly and tragically, the welfare of children.
- Hurricane Sandy affects some of you.
- And Sandy Hook Elementary affects all of us.
- Companies that are making financial gains include the gun industry, alcohol manufacturers, and gambling institutions.

It’s time, time to let you go to make your mark on this world, gently yet firmly as de Sales exhorts by just being who you are and being that well.

Do whatever he tells you ... it’s a real self-giving, a Christian vocation, as son, daughter, husband, wife, mother, father, single person, religious, or priest, making manifest who we are, the image of God!

We cannot wait to hear, to read about, to see your manifestation of the Spirit wherever you go.

Be assured of our prayers, heartfelt wishes, and best thoughts as we feel confident we have yours. In this way we see de Sales’ wisdom when he noted that

\[
\text{Those who go, stay} \\
\text{and those who stay, go!}
\]

Whether staying or going ... \textit{Do whatever he tells you!}

Rev. JOHN FISHER, O.S.F.S., Ed.D. 
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