



Cherish All Children

Pray + Educate + Connect + Act

Wednesday Prayer – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Three days later a wedding took place in the city of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his disciples had been invited too. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They're out of wine." Jesus said to her, "Why did you come to me? My time has not yet come." His mother told the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

Six stone water jars were there. They were used for Jewish purification rituals. Each jar held 18 to 27 gallons. Jesus told the servers, "Fill the jars with water." The servers filled the jars to the brim. Jesus said to them, "Pour some, and take it to the person in charge." The servers did as they were told. The person in charge tasted the water that had become wine. He didn't know where it had come from, although the servers who had poured the water knew. The person in charge called the groom and said to him, "Everyone serves the best wine first. When people are drunk, the host serves cheap wine. But you have saved the best wine for now." John 2:1-10

Shame is insidious, one of life's darkest traits, and one of the emotions which can hold us captive and can lead us into conduct and thoughts we otherwise would not experience. Shame can lurk in families for generations, and communities for years.

Jesus first official act of ministry after calling his disciples was an act of mercy at a wedding. Something was seriously wrong at the wedding and the potential for generations of shame for the family of the bride and groom and their family was high. There was not enough wine. Jesus, who was a guest at the wedding, relieved the situation with his first miracle, turning water to wine. Jesus prevented shame, quietly working behind the scenes unnoticed to prevent shame.

Prevention is hard. It is not dramatic. It does not grab the headlines or raise the money, but it is perhaps the most powerful means to provide what is needed for people to live well, to thrive, and be peaceful. Prevention is not precise. Its effects cannot be immediately quantified making budgets hard to meet and goals difficult to set. But many of us, with our small acts, carefully and quietly carried out now, can prevent a tsunami of shame and pain later on. May we look for ways to prevent pain and shame and their incessant and powerful waves. May we do so not with judgment or a sense of moral superiority, but with love and mercy just as Jesus did.

Gracious and merciful God, open our eyes and grant us wisdom to participate in your purposes by preventing suffering and shame. May we quietly and faithfully work in this way to uplift all people, all children, and all communities in love and wellbeing. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.

Written by Pastor Nathan Tuff, Olivet Lutheran Church, Sylvania Ohio & Cherish All Children Advisory Board Member.