

Epiphany 2 Pusey House , The Principal
The manifestation of our new creation in Christ.
Isaiah 62.1-5 [not 2 Kings 4.1-17], Romans 12.6-16a, John 2.1-11

This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

‘Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, man in God, God in man, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body.’¹ So says Peter Chrysologus, ‘Peter the Golden-worded’, the Bishop of Ravenna in second quarter of the 5th century. He was known for his short but inspired sermons, and inspired by him this sermon is much shorter than it was. If you are interested in drinking more, to risk a kind of sober inebriation, the fuller text will be online. [The extended text is in the footnotes.]

We don’t really leave the Magi behind in the season of Epiphany, what they see and adore shapes the character of these weeks, and we are shaped and changed by what they see.

‘The season of Epiphany is all about the manifestation, the showing forth, the shining forth, the “Epiphania” of the divine glory in Jesus Christ. And thus, all the commemorations which constitute this season are a continuing meditation upon the meaning and implications of the Christmas miracle: the miracle of God with us, God audible to human ears, God tangible to human touch; the miracle of God manifest in human life.’²

With the Gospel for this Sunday, we celebrate the third of the Great signs of the Epiphany:

WE observe this holy day, ornamented with three miracles: Today a star led the Magi to the manger;

Today in the Jordan Christ desired to be baptised by John, so that He might save us,

Today wine was made from water at the wedding. Alleluia.

This will be the communion anthem today, and this is the substance of our celebration.

¹ Peter Chrysologus , “Peter the Golden-worded”; c. 380 – c. 450[2]) was an Italian Christian prelate who served as Bishop of Ravenna from about 433 until his death.[3] He is known as the "Doctor of Homilies" for the concise but theologically rich reflections he delivered during his time as the Bishop of Ravenna.’ wiki

² Fr RD Crouse ‘The season of Epiphany is all about the manifestation, the showing forth, the shining forth, the “Epiphania” of the divine glory in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. And thus, all the commemorations which constitute this season are a continuing meditation upon the meaning and implications of the Christmas miracle: the miracle of God with us, God in our flesh, Emmanuel; the miracle of God visible to human eyes, God audible to human ears, God tangible to human touch; the miracle of God manifest in human life, restoring it and transforming it by the grace and truth he brings’

The Epiphany is also about how what is revealed changes us:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.³

The divine life is manifest in Christ so that there is an epiphany of the divine life in us.⁴

In Last Sunday's Gospel, the wisdom of God shone forth in Christ teaching the doctors in the Temple. The Epistle described how this wisdom is manifest in us: 'Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.' This is too simplistic of course, any manifestation of divine light contains many colours or messages, and we can only see or speak a small part of what God shows.⁵

Today, The Gospel lesson today presents 'Jesus' first miracle, 'the beginning of signs'. The miracle at the wedding feast is a sign of the marriage between God and humanity, and a sign of humanity being re-made by God. St Paul describes for us how this new life overflows in our ordinary live as Christians⁶

To help us to adore with the Magi and with the whole Church through the ages,⁷ we will look at the great signs of the Epiphany in relation to the account of the account of creation in Genesis Chapter 1. We will see our new creation in Christ more clearly with the help of the account of the first creation.⁸ Then, we will seek St Paul's help to see what this means for us today and every day.

³ 2 Cor 3.18

⁴ That is the continual theme of the Epistle lessons for the Sundays of this season. These Epistle lessons, mostly from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, form a marvelously coherent series—they build upon one another, and in every case they are significantly related to the particular Sunday's Gospel.'

⁵ Each week, 'the Gospel lesson shows some facet of the manifestation of God in Christ; and each week the Epistle lesson shows how what is manifest in Christ is manifest in our life as Christians'.

⁶ Extended quotation with some changes, Fr Crouse, Epiphany II 1982 St. James 'It is the sign that in union with Christ, our life is to be changed; it is the sign of God's power to give us new life in his spirit.'

The miracles are always signs, symbolic acts, and in this case, the very occasion, the wedding feast is itself a sign. At that wedding feast, Jesus changes water into wine, and that is a miracle; that is to say, a sign: a sign of God's power to transform creation.

It is especially a sign of What God has done in Christ. It is a sign that human nature and humanity life has been re-made and re-created in Christ, and it is a sign that God's Spirit is giving us new life now. We have been changed, we are being changed. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor 3.18

⁷ to enable us by God's grace working in us to give ourselves to the change which God the Holy Spirit is working in us,

⁸ Following and inspired by: 'The Seven Days of the New Creation in St. John's Gospel,' *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 21 (1958), pp. 507-516, and L. Paul Trudinger, 'The Seven Days

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.... And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.⁴ ... and God divided the light from the darkness.

So we read in Genesis Chapter 1.

John the evangelist reveals to us what is hidden in those verses of Genesis but which is made manifest in Christ.

‘In the beginning was the Word, [in the beginning before all time and any creation was the Word begotten before all worlds] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1.1

John tells us that this word is also the light which shone in the first day of creation: ‘⁴In him was life; and the life was the light of men.’⁹

The book of Genesis tells us that in that first day, light was separated from darkness, and that is what we hear in the Gospel of John also:

⁵ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

God divides light from the darkness, but how? The light of Christ is inscribed on the universe which he creates and sustains. The first sign of the Epiphany manifests this light. The visible light of a star leads Magi to Bethlehem and to ‘the life was the light of men’.¹⁰

The murderous anger of King Herod is the darkness which does not comprehend the light. The darkness is there also in those who listen to John the Baptist, but who do not see.¹¹ The Magi also separate light from darkness when they go back by another way, they separate themselves from the darkness of Herod.

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On the second day in Genesis, God separates the waters above from the waters below. The light of this second day is the light which shines in the second great sign of the Epiphany, the baptism of our Lord.¹²

of the New Creation in St. John's Gospel: Some Further Reflections,’ Evangelical Quarterly 44.3 (July-Sept. 1972): 154-159.

⁹ It is this Word who takes on flesh and his manifest among us.

¹⁰ This star is a sign pointing to light which is seen by the inner light of faith.

¹¹ The darkness is there in the religious leaders who Herod consults. They know enough to point the Magi to Bethlehem, but they do not go to worship with them, they do not step into the divine light.

¹² Our Lord's baptism is a theophany, a shining forth of God the Holy Trinity: Christ is manifest as the Beloved Son, begotten before all worlds, and already full of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of Christ is a revelation of God the Holy Trinity: ‘At your baptism in the Jordan, O Christ, the worship of the Trinity was revealed. For the Father's voice bore witness to you, calling you his

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament [a dome NRSV] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters....⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven.

The Gospel of John also separates the water above from the water below. John the Baptist baptizes with the water which is from below, he baptizes with earthly water as a sign of repentance. But another will come after John who will baptize with the Holy Spirit, with the 'rivers of living water' heavenly water. ¹³

When the Son of God comes down into the waters of the Jordan, water itself is baptized, water is given a new power to bring forth new humanity in the new-born members of Christ's body. By the union of God and humanity in Christ, the living waters from above give new life in and through the waters below.¹⁴

In the miracle of Cana the water pots are filled with water, water from below which may purify the body. This water from below becomes the water from above at the word the Lord Jesus, living water, the wine of divine grace, a sign which points to the sacrament of Holy Communion – where normal wine and bread become the sacrament of our Lord's body and blood.

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Now let us pass over the next days to go to the sixth day in the book of Genesis, and the sixth day in the Gospel of John. On the sixth day 'God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image ... male and female he created them.' On the sixth day of the second creation in the Gospel according to St

beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words. O Christ our God, who has appeared and enlightened the world, glory to you.' Feast of Theophany, Mary and Ware, *Festal Menaion*, 359, (altered) by Khaled Anatolios, *Deification through the Cross*, p. 156.

¹³ 'but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost'. The Baptist's declaration creates a symbolic separation between earthly water (baptism of repentance) and the heavenly water (baptism by the Holy Spirit, baptism by the water from above). John 1.33, rivers of living water -John 7.37

¹⁴ In Christ, and by our baptism into his life and death, the heavenly life which the waters cause to grow and flourish is given to us in the waters below. By his work of re-creation, The light which we see and adore in Christ is shines also in the members of his body, this life from above, is now our life even while will live among the waters below. The second day also manifests Christ as the Saviour, the Lamb of God. Thus by interpreting the Precursor's testimony John has made his message into a presentation of Jesus as divine Servant of the Lord, possessor and giver of the Spirit, who takes away the world's sin not simply by giving the Spirit, but by doing so through His expiatory and sacrificial death (as Suffering Servant and Paschal lamb).

John, the sign of water to wine manifests the recreation of humanity in Christ.¹⁵ Christ marries divine nature and human nature in himself, and because God and man are married in the Lord Jesus, God gives us a share in his divine life.

The miracle of water changed to wine reveals the prophesy of Isaiah fulfilled in Christ:

‘For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you’.¹⁶

In the words of Dr Pusey, the divine bridegroom Jesus Christ ‘espouses to himself each single soul, each of us, who, by His love, He draws unto Himself.’¹⁷

The joy of the most happy of all marriages can only point to the much greater joy of this marriage. Each of us, single or married, young and old, each one of us have been espoused to the divine bridegroom, all together we are members of his body, the people we find it easy to like, and even those we find puzzling or difficult, we are married to

¹⁵ The Bridegroom Jesus Christ gives creation its perfection. This is the third great sign of the Epiphany, and the first sign which Jesus does in the Gospel according to St John.

¹⁶ Isaiah 62.5 NRSV

¹⁷ Modified. Full quotation: ‘Then there began a three-fold union of God with man, of which that union of marriage was the image. [1] First there was the union of God the Word with our flesh, whereby He betrothed indissolubly to Himself our human nature, joining it in one Person with His Godhead, so that God and Man were one Christ. God the Son, Who as God fills all space and all eternity, liveth and shall live for ever as God and Man in perfect oneness. [2] This union cemented that further union shadowed out in the Canticles, whereby the whole number of the redeemed should be one mystical body, united through His Spirit and His sacraments with Him their Head. This union He shadowed forth when He formed Eve from Adam's side. From the Saviour's precious Side gushed forth, in His Passion, those two Sacraments, water and blood, by which the Church is formed. [3] ‘But since what Christ does for the whole Church, He, through His indivisible love, does for every soul which He makes His, in that same awful hour [when] He, with the bridal pledge and dowry of His outpoured Blood, espoused to himself each single soul which, by His love, He should draw unto Himself.

Hence, in the Gospel, marriage is a mystery, blessed in itself, when lived in according to the law and will of Christ; blessed, and holy, and mysterious, in that it is an image of a mystery as much above itself as heaven is above earth, yea God above man, the union of the Church or the single soul with Christ. “This is a great mystery,” says S. Paul, “but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” The oneness of marriage shadows forth that spiritual oneness whereby Christ and the whole company of the redeemed are so one, that He vouchsafes to speak of Himself as not complete without them; Himself “the Head of the Church,” “His Body, the fulness of Him Who filleth all in all.” Pusey, *THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE*, EPHESIANS V. 33., SERMON XXII, Parochial Sermons Vol II, 389-390.

him. He is the one who the Prophet Isaiah sees delighting in us, and he is the one who invites our love, love for love.¹⁸

Now, some of you may be distracted by my counting. I have described the day of the wedding as the 6th day, but St John the Evangelist describes it as ‘the third day’.¹⁹ The sixth day and the third day in the account of the wedding of Cana are one great day, a kind of Easter Triduum. This is of course not just playing for numbers, this is our new life in Christ, and this leads us back to St Paul where resurrection and cross go together in the Epistle for today.²⁰

With the magi, we are invited to come and to adore. Simply to adore and to worship Christ changes us, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. St Paul makes

¹⁸ ‘You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.’ Is 62.4

‘For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones’. We not just as spectators, to be a Christ is to be married to Christ and invited to make the words of the Song on our Lips: “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine.” The oneness of this marriage is so complete and intimate that the New Testament witness suggests that in some mysterious way Christ, who as God contains the fulness of all goodness and virtue, that Christ is one some way not complete without the members of his body, the Bride.

The better wine of the wedding feast points to this the best of all wine. This is the wine which is our Lord Jesus pour out for us today, and especially in the gift of Himself which we are all invited to seek and to receive. This wine ‘is the Fountain of Life’, wine which ‘infuses joy’ and ‘which establishes the walk of the sober mind’. Words fail, our hearts cannot contain it, words only point to a gift beyond telling.

¹⁹ In the 6th day of the first creation, humanity was created. St John describes the wedding feast as the third day. On the 6th day of the new creation, Christ died on the cross to overcome the power of sin and death. On that 6th day he espoused to himself the Church which flows from his side water and blood, the sacramental signs of our new life in him.

²⁰ On ‘The sixth day and the third day are one’, See L. PAUL TRUDINGER, ‘The Seven Days of the New Creation in St. John’s Gospel: Some Further Reflections,’ *Evangelical Quarterly* 44.3 (July-Sept. 1972), p 156.

On the Epiphany of Divine Light in Genesis and the Gospel according to St John

Seeing the miracle of the water turned to wine and the opening of John’s Gospel in relation to the book of Genesis helps us to see more of the mystery which is revealed in Christ. It helps us to see Christ as the key who unlocks the mystery of our lives and the key who unlocks the mystery of all things.

In the three great signs of the Epiphany, the created order both manifests and points to Christ. The logos who orders creation leads the magi to himself by the light of a star. In the baptism of our Lord, water is cleansed and sanctified to become the water from above, heavenly water. In the miracle of the water turned to wine, what God does every year by natural processes, he condenses and intensifies into a moment to reveal himself as the author of creation and to manifest something of the character of the new creation. ? He didn’t violate that, he just sped it up and intensified it. Again, grace does not despise nature, it supposes and perfects it.

this more specific, he describes the divine life overflowing in each of us, divine life shining in us.²¹

‘Let love be without dissimulation.[Let our love be real love.]

Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. [We could say, separate darkness from light]

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love [Imagine, here is a real miracle, kind when we feel stepped on or threatened]

... fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation [drinking the water from above]

Hearing this again, we may wonder if the divine life in Christ has really taken possession of us, if we really are married to the Son of God after all.

The Mother of our Lord, the daughter of Sion, gives us words here: ‘They have no wine’. She sums up our need, our need as individuals and our need as a people—we have a lot of water, a lot of the goods of this life, but we desperately need the wine of divine life and divine love which make the water below teem and become full with the life of the water from above.

Where do we find the wine of divine life? We begin with the ordinary water from below, we begin with the substance of our human lives.²² Having *then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us*. We may imagine that if we were to have someone else’s gifts, their intelligence, their creativity, their energy, their opportunities, their virtues, then we could begin. That is darkness. Instead, we begin with what we have been given already, we begin with the water poured into the six-water pots.

We begin by hearing the words of the Mother of our Lord, and our Mother in him: ‘Whatever he says do it.’ What wonderful counsel. We reach out toward the life of love which he has commanded us to choose for ourselves.²³ We begin with our hopes, or with the struggles we don’t want to have. We bring these struggles, our temptations, even our sins to Christ. He transforms these things poured out on his command to

²¹ My colleague the Chaplain at Pusey House once described this better wine in a beautiful way: ‘But the Christian who lifts a chalice to their lips is drinking not merely that liquid quintessence of concentrated sunbeams which is wine - but the material substance of the created order become the eternal life of Love Itself. And if that is the call of God on human life - to turn away from mere survival and drink deep of the cup that is set before us, to be poured out in that process by which all ‘worldly goods’ come into the fullness of their being, by being turned into gift; to become the humble dwelling of Divine Love’

²² This is the nature which is already infused with divine grace. Again, grace does not despise nature, grace supposes and perfects the nature which we have already been given.

²³ There is a real trial here. We are invited to have the humility to allow God to rease up and use what he has given us. The 6th day, the day of creation and the day of the cross, is intimately connected with the 3rd day, the day of the Resurrection, the 8th day. Christ cross and passion in us is connected closely with his raising us up to new life, to his re-creating us. We begin with the ordinary struggles and trials and hopes of day to day life

become patience, and a love which is real, a love and life born out of the struggle of the divine life taking shape in each of us

To put this another way, each of us are called to separate darkness from light in our lives. Each of us is called to turn away from the voice of Herod. This is a real and a daily battle. It's not easy to step into the light when many voices will say that it doesn't matter, or that it's not real.²⁴

What is true for us as members of the body of Christ is true in a more general way. 'They have no wine' describes the state of human life in need of the grace of God. We live in a place of abundance, with gifts of scientific insight and power, gifts of artistic flourishing, gifts of philosophy and political life, with the gifts which we have in technological or medical progress or in democratic institutions. But for these things to be brought to perfection, to give the peace and prosperity which they promise, all the ordinary goods of human life need to be brought to Christ who has already given them.²⁵

Today a star led the Magi to the manger; Today in the Jordan Christ desired to be baptised by John, Today wine is made from water at the wedding. Alleluia.

Our Lord has kept the better wine until now, until today. This is the wine which he pours out for us to drink in his holy word, this is the wine of divine grace, his superabundant grace, and this is the best wine which is given to us in the sacrament of His body and blood. O come let us worship. In the words of St Augustine's teacher, St Ambrose:

Drink Christ, because He is the Vine; drink Christ, because He is the Rock which pours out water; drink Christ, because He is the Fountain of Life; drink Christ, because He is the stream whose flowing gladdens the city of God; drink Christ, because He is peace; .. Drink, then, speedily, that "a great light" may dawn upon

²⁴ If love is to be real love in us, we will not simply go along with the loudest or the most powerful voice, we will let our minds be renewed by the perfect will of God – 'whatever he says do it'. There is a real struggle, and a real battle here. It's not easy to step into the light when many voices will say that it doesn't matter, or that it's not real. The 6th day of the cross and the new creation, the day of death to what is dead already in us, the day of weary struggle, goes together with the day of new life and resurrection. We know this, but we need to choose it again and again, to come to the wedding feast.

Every precious and beautiful word in these lines from the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans describes the water of our ordinary lives turned into wine, the fruition of the Glorious Godhead in the ordinary water of human life, our lives made new by the extraordinary grace of the living water from above

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVKio8RZKKA&list=PLm5H-tdyGVVpJNRHpQjs4b6f97y6irgEj&index=20>

Youtube: Jan 16, 2022 [Bishop Barron's Sunday Sermons](#)

When we bring all that we have to the Lord of the vineyard, he raises them to a higher pitch, He is a God of superabundant creativity. To give what they promise all the natural gifts and goods need to be brought within wisdom of God who gives them

you, not an every-day light, not of the day, not the sun, not the moon, but that light which removes the 'shadow of death!', the Light which is Christ our God shining on us and shining in us.²⁶

May St Ambrose's prayer be fulfilled for us and in us today, for the Church, and for the world, and for ourselves.

²⁶ Ambrose, modified and quoted in Pusey's discussion of the Eucharist in his *LETTER to the BISHOP OF LONDON*, 1851, p. 215. 'Blessed inebriation which infuses joy ... which establishes the walk of the sober mind ...'