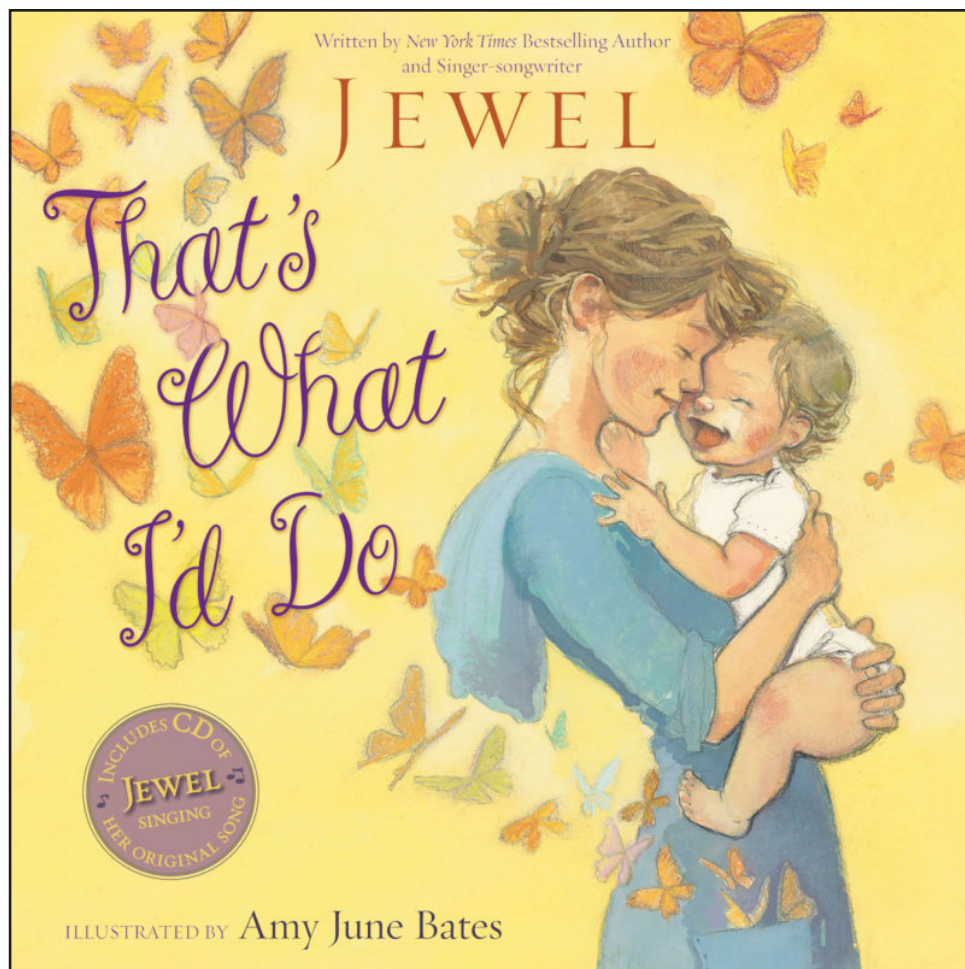


Living Grace

CYCLE C 2ND SUNDAY
ORDINARY TIME

“EVERYTHING I DO, I DO IT FOR YOU ”



***That's What I'd Do** celebrates the limitless love between mother and child. It was originally written as a lullaby by award-winning singer-songwriter, Jewel, for her first child, and is beautifully illustrated by Amy June Bates using watercolor, gouache, pencil, and pastels. The story follows a mother and child throughout the day. The mother paints the sun for baby's amusement, rocks him while giving him his bottle, and plays with him in a boat that looks much like a bathtub. They dance to bird song and admire themselves in a mirror. After a final rock in the chair, mother and baby end the story nose to nose. Jewel, said that the last page makes her tear up every time, and she hopes that the book becomes "a love story" between mothers and their children.*



THE WEDDING FEAST AT CANA

Panel from altarpiece painted by Duccio di Buoninsegna, 1308-1311

Museo dell'Opera del Duomo ~ Siena, Italy

EXPLORING THE ART:

The Maestà is huge altarpiece composed of many individual paintings created with tempera paint and gold on wood, originally designed for the high altar at the Siena Cathedral. The front panels make up a large enthroned Madonna and Child with saints and angels. The reverse side illustrates the Life of the Virgin and the Life of Christ in a total of forty-three small scenes including the Wedding Feast at Cana pictured above. The work was not only large, the central panel was 7 by 13 feet, but it had to be painted on both sides since it could be seen from all directions when installed on the main altar at the center of the sanctuary.

RELIGIOUS ART IN THE BYZANTINE ERA

Duccio was awarded the commission for the Maesta in 1308. To ensure compliance from their headstrong and unruly artist, the Sienese authorities drew up a contract which specified that the altarpiece should be painted entirely by the artist himself, and that he should accept no other jobs until the work was completed. In keeping with the ambitions of the city, expense was no object. Thus the finest color pigments were sourced and used, as well as copious amounts of gold leaf. When it was finally completed in June 1311, a public holiday was declared, bells were rung, and the Maesta was carried from Duccio's workshop to the cathedral in a huge procession which included all the religious and civic dignitaries, priests, and citizens of Siena.

Living Grace

READ-ALoud STORY



ABIDE IN ME

Vicki Shuck, Esperanza Arts

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love.

~ John 7:7-9

Read-aloud video link:

THAT'S WHAT I'D DO

Written by Jewel and Illustrated by Amy June Bates

Sunday Gospel

JOHN 2:1-11

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee,
and the mother of Jesus was there.
Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.
When the wine ran short,
the mother of Jesus said to him,
"They have no wine."
And Jesus said to her,
"Woman, how does your concern affect me?
My hour has not yet come."
His mother said to the servers,
"Do whatever he tells you."
Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings,
each holding twenty to thirty gallons.
Jesus told them,
"Fill the jars with water."
So they filled them to the brim.
Then he told them,
"Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter."
So they took it.
And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine,
without knowing where it came from
— although the servers who had drawn the water knew —,
the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him,
"Everyone serves good wine first,
and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one;
but you have kept the good wine until now."
Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee
and so revealed his glory,
and his disciples began to believe in him.

Making the Connections

FOR ADULTS

GOD'S GLORY IS REVEALED THROUGH THE LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE OF A MOTHER AND SON.

The mother in our children's story wishes that she could move sky, sun, rain, all of creation for a wonder-filled and magical world for her son. She wishes she could do the things that only God can do, to let her son know how much she desires for him. We can never know all that went on between Mary and Jesus in the 30 years that she raised him as her son, but we can imagine that Mary was a mother that would, "do, do, do.... because I love you, you, you" for her son. Out of that bond and strength Mary knows what her son can do, and she knows what she can ask of him.

The church places this reading after the gospel story of Jesus' baptism. Jesus' baptism initiates him by the power of the Holy Spirit to be able to "do" the works of his Heavenly Father, and now it is his mother who becomes the initiator of his public ministry. "Do," she said to Jesus, and he does. We can say that Mary "gets this party started", not just for the wedding guests, but most importantly for Jesus and his public ministry. The word is out, he is initiated, he is changed, his glory is revealed, and he goes forth. His followers join in, they believe. Mary's belief gave them the confidence to believe in her son. It is such a beautiful story to be included in the scriptures, that it is Jesus' mother that is so many ways 'kicks him out of the nest".

The time was right, the Father in the story was honored, saving the best wine for last. And the wine, the symbol of God's abundant love both in Jewish and Christian services, begins to flow. So does the work of growing the kingdom of God on earth. This work has not stopped. The wine is still flowing. God's love is still being poured forth, generation after generation upon the earth. We just have to tap into it, "everything I do, I do it for you". Mary for Jesus, Jesus for us.

When we hear people giving acceptance speeches for winning huge awards like the Olympics or the Oscars the person that is most often thanked along with God, is mom. It is universal - people from all races and nationalities thank their mothers at times of lifetime achievements. Moms have unique insights into the God given essence of their children. God has also given mothers the gift of intuitive wisdom in caring for their children and in calling forth their God given mission. They can sense when it is time to go forth.

If we too listen to our spiritual mother, Mary, and to our God-given mothers, we will know when our time has come...and the wine will flow!! St. Anselm said, "The Glory of God is the human person fully alive." Jesus mother knew it was his time to reveal God's glory. Your mom knows too what makes you fully alive. She will know when it is your time. You will know, too. "Do whatever she tells you." And in you, too, God's glory will be revealed.

Making the Connections

FOR CHILDREN

YOUR STORY: What kind of things does your mom do for you? Does she do those things for anyone else? Where do you think she gets her from to care for you? What motivates her? Who supports and inspires her? What are some of your favorite things your mom does for you? Does she often have good insight for you?

THE CHILDREN'S STORY: The mother in our story wishes that she could move sky, sun, rain, all of creation for a wonder-filled and magical world for her son. Why does the mother wish this?

THE GOSPEL STORY: What do you imagine Jesus' life was like as a child? How did Mary know who Jesus was and what he was called to? What did Jesus do when his mother asked him to change the water into wine? Did he think it was a good idea? How did Jesus handle it? How did Mary handle it? What was the outcome of Jesus doing what his mom knew he could do? Did it make a difference in people's lives? Then? Now? What do you think it means that Jesus' glory was revealed?

How do you think God shows his glory through you? Who might be the first person to notice the way that God is moving in your life? Why?

Biblical Background

JOHN 2:1-11

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING: Jesus is in Cana. Cana is in Galilee and was a bustling village located at the base of the foothills that lead higher to the home village of Jesus, Nazareth. Cana is famous in the region for its excellent wines. The area around Cana is perfect for the cultivation of grapes, and the vintage of the region has been praised far and wide.

TERMS: **Woman** Jesus uses this term to refer to his mother, and it seems quite callous to our English ears. It seems almost dismissive, but is not. In the original language of Jesus, the term we translate as "woman" would be better translated as "dear one" or "beloved one". This is a term of intimacy and love that Jesus uses when he addresses his mother in the Gospel of John.

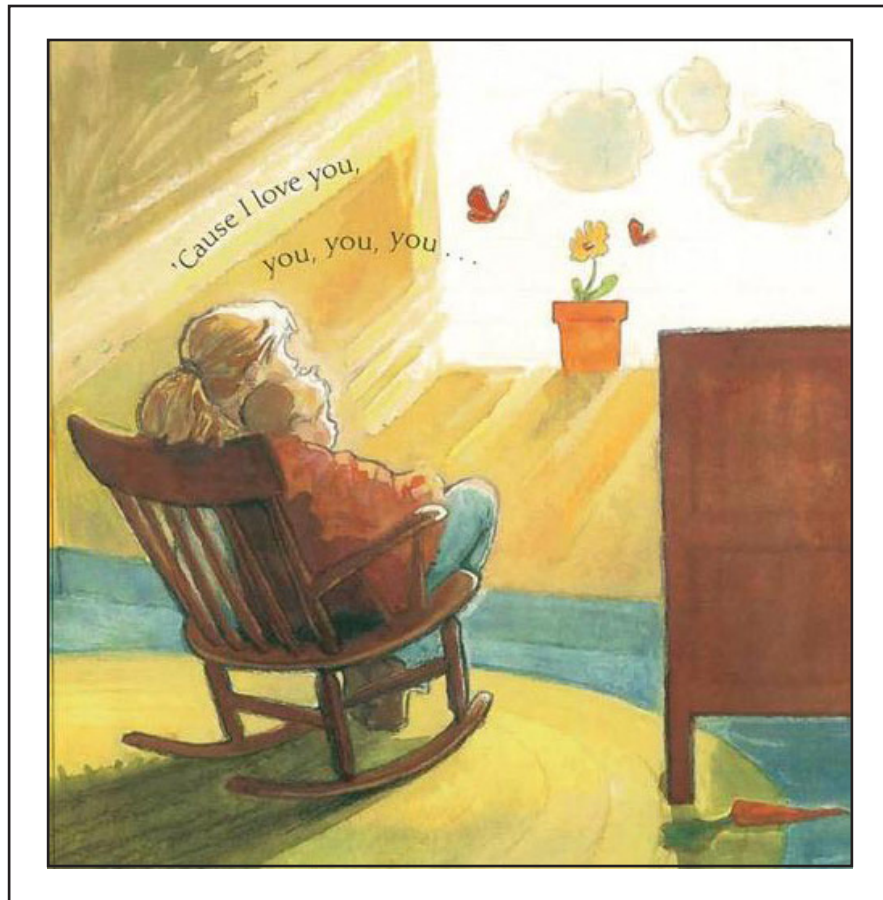
Signs John mentions that during the public ministry of Jesus he will perform seven specific signs. Each sign will reveal more fully that he is the Messiah. Some of the other signs include the healing of the paralytic in Chapter 5 and the raising of Lazarus in Chapter 11.

CULTURAL INSIGHT: Stone jars were used to store water that was going to be used for ceremonial washings. These ablutions would be offered to the guests when they arrive. The amount of water that they contain, over 120 gallons, has all been used. This suggests to a careful reader the great number of people that the father of the groom had hosted that evening. It is no wonder that they ran out of wine. These were thirsty guests. It is the responsibility of a Middle Eastern host to provide more food and drink than your guests might ever be able to consume. To run out of anything was considered shameful. The mother of Jesus is aware of this and directs Jesus to intervene on behalf of the hosting family. The chief steward of the wedding reception is surprised that the servants have procured this fine vintage to be consumed at the end of the evening celebration. He calls the young groom aside to castigate him; informing him that the best wine was to be presented at the beginning of the celebration not at the end.

INSIGHT INTO MEANING: It is clear in the Gospel that Jesus and his mother must have discussed when he was going to officially begin his public ministry. It seems they had agreed upon a time after he had journeyed to Jerusalem and after he would attend the wedding of family friends in Cana. A need arises that will affect the honor of the hosting family. Mary sees the need and directs Jesus into action. He wonders what this has to do with him, as this is not part of the agreed upon plan. However, he is faithful and loyal to his mother, so he does as she directs, and he solves the problem by transforming simple water into the best wine the chief steward had ever tasted - only the best for these guests. Wine is a symbol of joy, the good fruit produced by the Kingdom of God. Symbolically this excessive outpouring of joy is equated with the coming of the Kingdom that Jesus will bring about. This story initiates the work Jesus has come to do and symbolically foreshadows what the good fruits will be. The work of God amongst the Jewish people can also be referenced here as to Jesus meaning and purpose. The first wine is good, but in Jesus comes the second wine which is fuller and richer, and the surplus never ends.

Family Activities

SHARING THE MISSION AT HOME
AND IN THE WORLD



QUESTION OF THE WEEK: Do you always like to do what your mother asks of you? Whose interest do you think she has in mind? Ask your mom and dad to talk about the ways they see God's glory alive in you? Can you see it too?

CHARACTER QUALITIES: RESPECT FOR ELDERLY
SEEING GOD'S GLORY IN YOURSELF

FAMILY ACTIVITIES: Do a search for as many pictures and paintings of Mary and Jesus that you can find. What do they have in common? What is different? Do a search of artistic depictions of Mother and Child from around the world. What can you learn about different cultures in the way they honor and illustrate the mother and child relationship? Find your favorite picture of you with your Mom, frame it and put it in your room. Make a commitment to give thanks to God every day for your mom and to pray for her.