

As important as she is to our faith, the Blessed Virgin Mary does not speak often in sacred scripture. But when she does, her words overflow with wisdom. The account of the Wedding at Cana gives us her last recorded words, “do whatever He tells you.”

We know that Mary pondered in her heart all the questions and circumstances that surrounded her son. She knew who He was because God had told her that she would bear the son of the Most High. Mary was the first Christian, the first Catholic. At the Annunciation she was filled with the Holy Spirit and dedicated the rest of her life to supporting, and serving, and contributing to the mission of her son.

At Baptism, we too receive the Holy Spirit, and at Confirmation we receive the fullness of the Spirit's gifts. As mature Christians, at Confirmation we declare our intention to spend our lives as Mary did, supporting, serving, and contributing to the mission of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

But as honorable as our intentions may be when we make that promise, we soon find that it is not easy to follow through on. Our life is full of challenges, surprises, and temptations. It is all too easy for us to get distracted from the path. Mary's last words help us. Those five simple words hold the keys to staying focused in our efforts to follow Christ and discover the happiness that only He can give.

One of the most ancient prayers we have that centers around Mary is the Litany of Loretto. Within that litany we find one of her most endearing titles, “The Star of

the Sea.” Just as the stars helped ancient mariners navigate through the trackless oceans, Mary acts as a star guiding us through the stormy seas of our lives. A star is not the sun, it only reflects the light of the sun. And Mary, is not her Son, but she reflects His light and guides us to Him.

At Cana, Mary was not in charge of the wedding feast, that would have been the responsibility of the bride's father. It would not have been an easy task. The ancient world did not have a five day, 8-9 hour a day work week. People worked pretty much every day, from sun up to sun down. Weddings offered one of the few occasions to take some time off and relax and enjoy yourself. This explains why wedding festivities often lasted an entire week.

By now Jesus had already assembled His apostles. These were His friends that would spend the next three years traveling with Him, learning from Him, and sharing their lives with Him. When they showed up at the wedding they would have joined the festivities just like everyone else.

So with a bunch of hard working fishermen in the party, it's no wonder they ran out of wine. This would have been a huge embarrassment to the father of the bride and he would have relied on his headwaiter, or his head “caterer,” to make sure there was enough food and drink. But the head waiter was not the one who notices that the wine is running short. Instead it was the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Even in the midst of a huge boisterous party, Mary was not focused on her own needs, she was focused on the needs of others. That shows the heart of a servant.

She recognized the potential disaster and took it upon herself to do something about it, to avoid the scandal and disappointment that threatened the bride's family.

This was Mary's approach to life, a life of creative service. Mary was attentive to opportunities to help others, and she seized those opportunities. This was how she reflected in her own life, the generosity and goodness of God, who is always thinking of us, providing for us, and watching over us. This attitude of creative service is one of the first keys to being a true follower of Christ.

The second key is complete and total trust and confidence in God. Mary was not exactly in a position to buy more wine for the party, she didn't have the resources to fix the problem. But she knew who did.

Imagine yourself at this party. Jesus is over there laughing and joking with his friends. Even if you were not in His inner circle you managed to get close enough to hear their conversation because the charisma of Jesus drew people to Him. Their conversation stops abruptly as Mary comes up to her son and tells Him “they have no wine.” “So?” He replies, “what does that have to do with me?”

And the Blessed Mother does not tell Him what to do, she does not cajole or plead with him. She simply turns to the servants and tells them “do whatever He tells you.” You can easily imagine Jesus shaking His head and smiling slightly and thinking to Himself, “mom!”

Mary knows the heart of her son. She knows that it is full of goodness and generosity and mercy and love. She knows that He is the all powerful Son of God.

And so she has no problem approaching Him with complete confidence, trusting that the combination of love and mercy and power, will solve the problem.

This is how we should approach Jesus. He is our Savior. He came to earth for our sake. He loves us unconditionally, and His infinite power and wisdom are at the service of that love.

Even when our prayers are not answered in the way we would like them to be, we can be certain that God knows what He is doing. In our needs and our confusion, our troubles and our sufferings, we need only make Mary's prayer our own. "They – we – I, have no wine."

Complete and utter trust in the goodness and power of God is the second key.

The third key is also given to us by our mother, "do whatever He tells you." This is the true test of our confidence in the Lord's goodness and power. Are we obedient to His will?

The waiters at Cana had no reason to do as Jesus told them. Filling jars with water wasn't going to fix the situation. And it was hard work besides. Only Mary's complete confidence in Jesus could have motivated them to obey, a confidence that overflowed into their own hearts. As a result, they became part of the miracle that saved the day.

The same thing happens in our own lives. The teachings of the Church appear more and more out of step with the secular world every day. As a result those

teachings often appear illogical. “Everyone else is using contraception, it must be OK.” “Everyone else is using in vitro fertilization, and it's legal, it must be OK.” “Everyone else is doing drugs, having sex outside of marriage, and living together. Our most popular tv shows treat this as common and ordinary, what could be wrong about it?”

Faced with this constant pressure from the outside world, obeying Church teaching often seems to be too much work. “How can I fit daily prayer into my busy schedule?” “How can we possibly afford another child?” “Sunday Mass is so inconvenient, I have to get up early and put on nice clothes, can't I just talk directly to God instead?” “How do I find time to visit the sick, feed the hungry, and instruct the ignorant?”

When we allow Mary's complete confidence in Jesus to overflow into our own hearts and minds, we too will find enough faith to obey what God asks of us. Then we too will become part of a miracle.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, the Star of the Sea, is teaching us today how to follow her Son, how to become mature Christians. By imitating her attitude of creative service, by sharing in her complete confidence in God, and by joining her obedience to God's will, we will travel surely and swiftly along the path of a truly meaningful, fulfilling, and everlasting life.

So let us ask Mary to intercede for us as she did for the newlyweds at Cana, so that even when we do not seem to have any wine left in our hearts, God's grace will still flow freely in us and through us.