

We have entered what is termed ordinary time, that is, in the liturgical unfolding of the year, but there is no ordinary time. For those with the eyes and ears and every other sense – summed up in the word spiritual perhaps – to see it. Every day and time is extraordinary but it takes time for this to unfold and become our everyday experience; for us to become present to it. Jesus' reaction to his mother is perhaps symbolic of all our journeys into full knowledge. He's at a joyous event for sure but he's there as a guest without responsibility. They run out of wine. Isn't it great that it's someone else's problem, not mine. But his mother is troubled and finds herself saying to him: 'They have no wine'. Jesus reacts in a distant and distancing way 'What do you have to do with me?' or, as we might put it today, 'What's that got to do with me? I'm here as a guest, it's not my problem'. And yet a spark has been lit, a stirring of his conscience perhaps, a feeling of an 'is' becoming an 'ought', an awakening of compassion and service of others and he, in turn, finds himself responding to his mother's directions, to her act of faith. John's gospel is cast very much in the light of Jesus knowing who he is and what he wants to do, all along, but here, as with the baptism in the Jordan and the visit of the wise men, other voices, other people are needed to spur this identity on, to bring it to full flower. It's the journey of love and growth into full self-awareness – paradoxically also a forgetting of the self in order to find oneself, that gradual overcoming of our natural resistance to service. We become who we are through our actions and they not only reveal who we are to ourselves but to others. There's a growing sense now that Jesus is rather special and in his company there are no ordinary days left. What he now finds is not only a responsibility for these wedding guests but for a band of disciples and a wedding that encompasses everything. Turning water into wine is a Eucharistic action celebrating God's intimate concern and love for all creation. Its beginnings must needs be in a particular place and time for a particular people – the Israel of God's chosen people – but his role is cosmic – it's the coming of a new Spring or as Henry Thoreau put it, every spring was *'like creation of cosmos out of chaos'*. So this is no ordinary time we are living through, it's a spring time when, despite all appearances to the contrary, there is a stirring of life, of love, of compassion and service, which affects us all – only some see it and some don't. It's God at work in all of us, as Paul so beautifully put it in his letter to the Corinthians, for the sake of everyone. We are now Messiah too however reluctant we might be to acknowledge the fact

'There are all sorts of Service to be done, but always to the same Lord: working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them'.

In all of us – the one Christ – and it's in this sense that there is no ordinary time left, or better perhaps, this is what ordinary time is meant to look like.

Br John Mayhead
Monastery of Christ Our Saviour