

Glastonbury 9 July 2022 From Saint John's Gospel Mary said 'Do whatever he tells you!'

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Years ago, I had a friend and from time to time we would meet up and go out for a drink.

The pattern was always the same. As soon as we got to the pub, he would open the door for us and say 'Thanks! mine's a pint'! And always when it got to his round he would always say, 'Can't stay much longer. Everyone happy with a half?'

I used to hope that next time it would be different! He'd order pints all round.

Hope over expectation – and always disappointed!

Pondering today's Gospel what then are the differences between hope and divine hope!

At the wedding feast at Cana. The hope was that the wine would last out and that the hosts had catered generously and adequately enough for several days of feasting.

Hopes that were not fulfilled because the wine ran out.

A terrible embarrassment for the bride's parents to be remembered and no doubt gossiped about in the village for years to come.

The expectation was that if at this late stage any wine could be found it would by necessity be of poorer quality.

All that was around were six stone water jars – huge amounts of water to ritually cleanse the guests' hands over several days.

So, low expectations and very little hope!

Transformed by Jesus who saved the day for the hosts, kept the party going, and despite himself, revealed a glimpse of his true nature. What Jewish son can disobey his mother!

Although there are many reasons why, down the centuries, Mary has been given the title of Mother of Divine Hope, it all starts with this miracle at the wedding in Cana.

For divine hope is at the heart of Christian life and experience.

And it is very, very different from keeping our fingers crossed and hoping for the best!

It's a belief and understanding that in God, ultimately all things will work out for the best. Theologically we know it as 'Saving History'.

Before time began, God had us in his mind as his beloved creation.

And despite all that we manage to do in making a mess of things, he is always there underpinning, supporting and encouraging us, suffusing life in all its complexities with his divine grace.

Look around us.

A once glorious monastery built and embellished for sacred worship to the glory of God wantonly desecrated and spoiled in a time of political and social upheaval. At the time an utter disaster!

Half a millennium later, these ruins are not only poignantly and breathtakingly beautiful, but again, a place where Christians gather to sing the praises of the Living God.

Mary tells the attendants to do whatever her Son tells them. Not what she wants but what Jesus wants.

As a mother she is also a follower. She believes in him and early on in his ministry as a young rabbi she is certainly not disappointed.

That will come later in the treachery and tragedy that leads to his dereliction and death.

Then, three days later divine hope is fully realised in his resurrection and ascension.

And at Pentecost Mary too, is filled with life giving grace and becomes first among the disciples.

Mother of Divine Hope.

And for us today on 9 July 2022 at this Christian Glastonbury Festival?

Brothers and sisters, we are here! Despite all that we have to deal with in and out of Church. we are here.

There is sunshine and there is joy in the air.

And in our Eucharist the kingdom inbreaks for Christ is among us. Giving us all we need as Pilgrims in the Way, journeying to the New and Heavenly Jerusalem.

In this our generation we are called and have responded as His disciples.

Like those first disciples we put our trust in Him. And like them we will not be disappointed. We have Holy Church, sacramental assurance, Mary for our Mother, and the prayers of all the Saints. And one another!

As is and has been the Mantra for many years at the Youth Pilgrimage in Walsingham the response to 'All the time God is good' comes the reply: 'God is good all the time'!

Brothers and Sisters.

'All the time God is Good'!

*'God is good all the time'!*