



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

† Sunday 20th January 2019

In England and Wales –

Cycle of Prayer: Prayer for Christian Unity; Peace on Earth

Keynote: Called in love to be one with God

Prophet Isaiah 62: 1-5

Jerusalem and its people have been unfaithful to the Lord God, but the prophet speaking out on behalf of God, says, *'I will not be silent... I will not grow weary, until integrity shines like the dawn...'* God's relationship with the people despite their infidelities, is described in terms of the ideal, stable, ever faithful, union of marriage, where forgiveness, joy and love bring a deep lasting oneness. The Prophet sees the time, still to come, when *'You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the Lord God... no longer to be deemed forsaken... the nations will see your integrity, and all the kings your glory'*. Continuing with the theme of the adulterous Israel being restored to the joyful age of former innocence, the prophet speaks of the people of Israel, as the bride of the forever-faithful Lord God. *'As the bridegroom rejoices in his bride so will your God rejoice in you... like a young man marrying a virgin... as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride so will your God rejoice in you.'*

Responsorial Psalm 95 (96) – in praise of God's creation

First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 12: 4-11

Paul addresses his letter to the people of Corinth, a city state which had the reputation as 'Sin City', but here Paul, possibly responding to a question raised by the Christians of that city, speaks of there being *'a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit'*. With all the different kinds of service to be done, the Spirit is given to each person for some good purpose. *'One may have, the gift of wisdom, given by the Spirit; another may have the gift of preaching instruction given by the same Spirit; and another the gift of faith given by the same Spirit; another the gift of healing, through this one Spirit... the gift of prophecy, or the gift of discerning spirits,'* but *'all these'* the apostle tells us *'are the work of one and the same Spirit, who distributes different gifts to different people just as he chooses.'* Each of us must choose how best to use the individual gifts we have been given, and to use them as part of the body of Christ in the service of others.

Gospel according to John 2: 1-11

The disciples and others present at the marriage in Cana witness the sign Jesus gave, and they recognise the power of the Lord. At another level, the evangelist is announcing the good news with a deeper spiritual meaning. The jars used for Jewish rites of purification are standing full of water for the ritual washing of the guests as required by the Torah. But this water is replaced with the new wine of the messianic wedding feast – the wine of salvation, the wine of joy. The changing of water into wine is itself a sign of the restoration of God's favour and marks the beginning of the new era, the new Covenant of Salvation. As the Steward of the wedding says, *'People generally serve the best wine first and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you kept the best wine till now.'* John, the evangelist drives the point home, inviting our own response of faith saying, *'this was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and the disciples believed in him.'* In the setting of fidelity in marriage, Jesus gives us a sign, and invites us to respond recognising him as Lord.

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Note: Sunday Reading cycle C continues, and weekday cycle 1 is in use.