

2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 19 JANUARY 2025



COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who govern all things,
both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow your peace on our times.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

Since the Feast of the Lord's Baptism, we have just completed the first week in Ordinary Time. So the first Sunday is, yes, the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time! Year C in the cycle of gospel readings follows the Gospel of Luke, but for this first Second Sunday, the gospel is always taken from John. He provides a transition from the Christmas Cycle. In Years A and B, the reading from John is about John the Baptist (again), but this year we are privileged to hear the story of the wedding feast at Cana.

The story of Cana has long been associated with the cluster of Christmas mysteries because, standing early in John's Gospel, it is again a story of revelation about who Jesus is. It is in harmony with the themes of Epiphany and the Lord's baptism. As the final sentence of the gospel says: *He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

62:1–5

About Zion I will not be silent,
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,
until her integrity shines out like the dawn
and her salvation flames like a torch.

The nations then will see your integrity,
all the kings your glory,
and you will be called by a new name,
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.
You are to be a crown of splendour
in the hand of the Lord,
a princely diadem in the hand of your God;
no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken,'
nor your land 'Abandoned,'
but you shall be called 'My Delight'
and your land 'The Wedded';
for the Lord takes delight in you
and your land will have its wedding.

Like a young man marrying a virgin,
so will the one who built you wed you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,
so will your God rejoice in you.

First Reading

In view of the Cana gospel, a nuptial oracle from the prophet Isaiah has been chosen as the first reading. (It was also listed for the Mass of the Vigil of Christmas.)

The people of God are returning from exile to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Isaiah imagines God speaking words of love to them, addressing them as a groom to his bride: *as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you!* These words are the glorious conclusion to the reading.

In the biblical tradition a new name meant a new identity. So, part of the consolation offered by Isaiah is to rename the city. No longer to be known as 'Forsaken' or 'Abandoned', instead it will be called 'My Delight' and 'The Wedded'. Isaiah looks forward to a new loving relationship with God.

Obviously, this is a text to be proclaimed brightly, with optimism and joy. The images are strong, the lines short. It is a precious opportunity for a reader.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 95:1–3, 7–10

R. Proclaim his marvellous deeds
to all the nations.

○ sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.

○ sing to the Lord, bless his name. **R.**

Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples. **R.**

Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord glory and power,
give the Lord the glory of his name. **R.**

Worship the Lord in his temple.

○ earth, tremble before him.

Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.'

He will judge the peoples in fairness. **R.**

Responsorial Psalm

In the course of the year, verses from Psalm 95/96 are used in a variety of different combinations for the responsorial psalm. This psalm proclaims and praises God as king.

We sing joyfully to God because God helps us day by day and rules us fairly. A psalm like this cries out to be sung. But if the parish does not have a cantor, the reader will need to read it lyrically, making good use of the repetitions, *sing sing sing* and *give give give*. These can bring to the reading a musical quality.

The psalm celebrates God's marvellous deeds, the wonders God has wrought for us. Our response is to worship in awe (with trembling). A good reader will try to create for the assembly a sense of wonder, a sense of the sacred in God's presence.

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians 12:4–11**

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; 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. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose. One may have the gift of preaching with wisdom given him by the Spirit; another may have the gift of preaching instruction given him by the same Spirit; and another the gift of faith given by the same Spirit; another again the gift of healing, through this one Spirit; one, the power of miracles; another, prophecy; another the gift of recognising spirits; another the gift of tongues and another the ability to interpret them. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, who distributes different gifts to different people just as he chooses.

**A reading from the holy Gospel
according to John 2:1–11**

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said, 'Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them to the brim. 'Draw some out now,' he told them, 'and take it to the steward.' They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – only the servants who had drawn the water knew – the steward called the bridegroom and said, 'People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now.'

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

Second Reading

From now until the beginning of Lent, the second reading is taken from chapters 12—15 of Paul's first letter to the Church at Corinth.

The Corinthian community was vibrant, diverse and divided. Paul writes to them about leadership in the community, corrects them on matters of sexual morality, and urges dignity in their worship.

The community was blessed with many gifted people, but regrettably there was competition and rivalry between them. Over the coming weeks, Paul will write beautifully about how all the gifts are complementary, urging harmony and unity in the Church.

Today, Paul explains how all the gifts come from the same Holy Spirit and all are directed to the common good. The list of gifts is not meant to be exhaustive. The text is an invitation to the listeners to discern the movement of the Spirit within themselves and to ask themselves how they are called to contribute to the work of the Body of Christ. The reader should have in mind the implied question for the people... and what about you? What is your gift?

The reader should put the emphasis on the various gifts, not the repeated word 'another'.

Gospel

This story is not about excessive amounts of wine and drinking to excess. Certainly, there is human interest in Mary and Jesus' care for the married couple in their embarrassment. There is a lesson in the intercession of the Virgin Mary before her son. But there is something greater here.

In the gospel of John, signs are a revelation of who Jesus is and what his mission is. In word and action, he has come to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of God. Often represented in terms of a wedding banquet, the messianic feast is characterised by abundant fine wine. Thus this 'sign' points to the kingdom of heaven and Christ's role in bringing it about. It is this that leads to the disciples' response of faith.

Jesus as the Christ has come to inaugurate a new covenant accomplished in his death and resurrection. The wine of the new covenant replaces the water of purification which represents the old covenant. As John wrote in the prologue to his gospel: *though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ.*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

May the Lord bless us and keep us.

Amen.

May he let his face shine upon us
and show us his mercy.

Amen.

May he turn his countenance towards us
and give us his peace.

Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come down on us and remain with us for ever.

Amen.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for Ordinary Time I, Roman Missal p. 714)

An alternative translation of the scripture readings is given here from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). This may be particularly useful for those in parishes which use the NRSV Lectionary.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING (NRSV)

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 62:1–5

The Lord says this: For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

"The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

"You shall no more be termed 'Forsaken,'
and your land shall no more be termed 'Desolate';
but you shall be called 'My Delight Is in Her,'
and your land 'Married'; for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.

"For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (NRSV)

Psalm 96.1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 9-10ac (R.3)

R. Proclaim God's marvellous deeds to all the nations.

O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day. **R.**

Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvellous works among all the peoples.
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods. **R.**

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts. **R.**

Worship the Lord in holy splendour;
tremble before him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, "The Lord is king!
He will judge the peoples with equity." **R.**

SECOND READING (NRSV)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians 12:4–11

There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;
and there are varieties of activities,
but it is the same God
who activates all of them in everyone.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit
for the common good.
To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom,
and to another the utterance of knowledge
according to the same Spirit,
to another faith by the same Spirit,
to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,
to another the working of miracles,
to another prophecy,
to another the discernment of spirits,
to another various kinds of tongues,
to another the interpretation of tongues.

All these are activated by one and the same Spirit,
who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

GOSPEL (NRSV)

A reading from the holy gospel according to John 2:1–12

There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee,
and the mother of Jesus was there.
Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him,
“They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her;
“Woman, what concern is that to you and to me?
My hour has not yet come.”
His mother said to the servants,
“Do whatever he tells you.”

Now standing there were six stone water jars
for the Jewish rites of purification,
each holding about a hundred litres.
Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.”
And they filled them up to the brim.
He said to them, “Now draw some out,
and take it to the chief steward.” So they took it.

When the steward tasted the water that had become wine,
and did not know where it came from
(though the servants who had drawn the water knew),
the steward called the bridegroom and said to him,

“Everyone serves the good wine first,
and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk.
But you have kept the good wine until now.”

Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee,
and revealed his glory;
and his disciples believed in him.
After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother,
his brothers, and his disciples;
and they remained there a few days.