



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 20th January 2019 - The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 20th January 2019 - The Wedding-Feast at Cana (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.

3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

Year C is the year of Luke's gospel, but we start with this reading from John which recounts the symbolic beginning of Jesus' ministry. It is full of riches. After the first reading from Isaiah it is impossible not to see this 'sign' (as John calls it) as a sign of that final wedding-feast of God and his people. Furthermore, in Jewish thought, water represents the Law: in an arid land water is the sign of life and is precious – just so, the Law of God is precious and gives life. Jesus transforms this water of the Law into the wine of the New Covenant – and in such generous quantities: over one hundred gallons of wine! Then there is Mary's part: Jesus says his Hour has not yet come (and the reader knows that the Hour of Jesus will be the moment of his exaltation at the Cross and Resurrection), but Mary's confident plea is a reminder to us of the power of her intercession. She will be mentioned no more in this gospel till she is present at the Cross, sharing the passion of her Son and joined to the Beloved Disciple to form the first Christian community.

Why did Jesus choose to do this as his first miracle?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 20th January 2019



First Reading: *The Wedding-Feast of the Lord*

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.

The marriage relationship is perhaps the most intimate of the personal relationships we know, designed to become ever deeper and more absorbing. Even the relationship of mother to child cannot equal it. So in the Bible the relationship of the Lord to his people is likened to the relationship in marriage. But, like many human marriage relationships, it went through bad patches. Israel was so persistently unfaithful to the Lord that eventually it seemed that the Lord abandoned her to those with whom she had 'prostituted' herself. This could not be permanent; Israel could not go on being called 'Abandoned' and 'Forsaken'; the past would be forgotten. After the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, Isaiah prophesies the final wedding in terms of the unalloyed joy of a freshly wedded couple. So in the gospels, Jesus uses the figure of the final wedding-feast, and the image of himself as the bridegroom in the joy of the festival. The Lord always gives us another chance, an unalloyed welcome to his feast.

What does it mean to liken our relationship with God to the relationship between a couple in marriage?

Second Reading: *Gifts of the Spirit*

1 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.

At the beginning of each year the Church gives us some six Sundays of readings from Paul's first letter to that troubled community, the Corinthians. Corinth was a thriving port-town of southern Greece, with a very varied community, rich and poor, academics and dockers. There were no clear human leaders in the Church community, and reliance on the Spirit for guidance in the problems of living as Christians did not always seem to provide a solution. The readings on these three Sundays show Paul trying to help. Yes, the Spirit is at work in the community in many different ways. There are many different gifts, all necessary for this varied community. The trouble seems to have been that each person valued their own contribution so much that the gifts of others seemed insignificant. Paul's stress on the variety of ways in which the Spirit works to build up a community gives us the occasion to reflect on the variety of gifts which the Spirit has poured out on our own Christian community, and on every individual member of it. I can rejoice in gifts which God has given to me, but only if simultaneously I think of all the gifts which others have and I lack.

What gifts do we need in a Christian community for its full flourishing under God? How do we help all in the community realise the diversity of gifts?

“ I can rejoice in gifts which God has given to me, but only if simultaneously I think of all the gifts which others have and I lack. ”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*
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