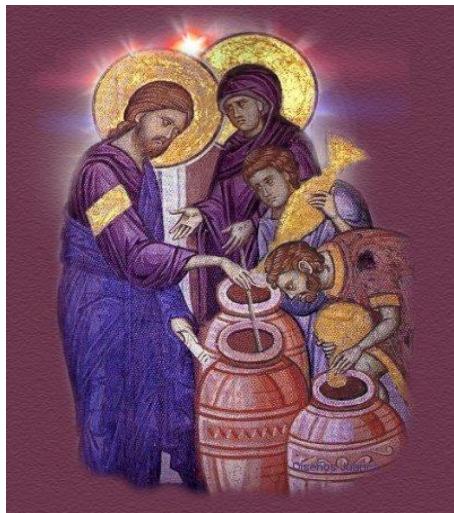


**Sunday Readings Study for Small Communities**  
**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Cycle B - January 16. 2022



**OPENING PRAYER**

Leader: Let the whole earth bow before you, Lord; Let everyone sing hymns in your honor and praise your name.

All: Almighty and eternal God, who with love governs the heavens and the earth, listen to the plea of your people and make the days of our lives pass in your peace.

Leader: *Let us invoke the presence of God:*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit have instructed the hearts of the faithful grant that by the same Spirit we may truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**FIRST READING** [ Isaiah 62 (1-5) ]

**For Zion's sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her vindication shines forth like the dawn and her victory like a burning torch. Nations shall behold your vindication, and all the kings your glory; you shall be called by a new name pronounced by the mouth of the Lord.**

**You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem held by your God. No more shall people call you "Forsaken", or your land "Desolate", but you shall be called "My Delight", and your land "Espoused."**

**For the Lord delights in you and makes your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.**

Jerusalem is presented as a bride about to get married. A sentry yells impatiently at dawn. The song awakens the city. It is their wedding day. When the sun finally rises, its rays illuminate the walls and the whole of Jerusalem shines like "a lush crown", "a royal diadem." The city then resembles the crown that the husband imposes on the head of the wife.

The bridegroom is Yahweh, who offers his beloved as gifts for the wedding day, "justice" and "salvation." His love for the city is faithful and eternal: "The Lord prefers you and your land will have a husband." The years of exile are behind, in which the people have lived in exile and have mourned the desolation of their land: "They will no longer call you 'abandoned', or your land 'devastated' ....". It is not about a simple reunion between the city-wife, and God-husband. It is a true courtship. A new beginning founded on love and reciprocal fidelity: "As a young man marries his bride, so he who builds you the joy that his husband finds with her wife marries, your God will find with you."

Application: Herein lies the novelty of the NT missionary apostolate practically unknown in the OT. The Church, the new Israel of God, has the task of communicating to the nations the good news of God's plans. She lives from the Easter event, which inaugurates the end of time. The purpose of the apostolate is not to "conquer", but to reunite the human community in Christ, not in Jerusalem. Evangelization is the presence of God's people in the midst of humanity and the presence of God in his people, the Church.

- (1) Why does Isaiah use the image of marriage to explain the relationship between God and his people?
- (2) Can our knowledge of human love help us understand how much God loves his people?
- (3) How can this text be explained in light of our knowledge of the New Testament?

## SECOND READING [ 1 Corinthians 12 (4-11) ]

### **Brothers and sisters:**

**There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.**

**To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.**

**To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another, the expression 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, mighty deeds; to another, prophecy; to another, discernment of spirits; to another, varieties of tongues; to another, interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.**

Paul recalls that charisms, despite their diversity, have a single origin: "the same Spirit", "the same Lord", "the same God"; secondly, it underlines the variety and plurality of the manifestation of charisms: "diversity of gifts", "diversity of services", "diversity of ministries"; He concludes by affirming that all charisms have a single purpose: "in each one the Spirit is manifested for the common good." A beautiful synthesis of the Pauline theology of the charisms: unity in origin, plurality in manifestation, unity in purpose. In vv. 8-11 Paul offers a kind of "catalog" of charisms, although he obviously does not mean that these are the only ones or the most important ones.

- (1) Is the violin more important than the piano in an orchestra? Why?
- (2) Are miraculous deeds or preaching more important than discernment of spirit or healing in a community? Why?
- (3) Why does God-Holy Spirit grant certain gifts to people?
- (4) What would happen in a community where everyone received the exact same gifts from the Holy Spirit?
- (5) Did Beethoven or Van Gogh receive their talents for their own benefit?
- (6) Try to identify the gifts that the H.S. has granted to group members

## GOSPEL [ John 2 (1-11) ]

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

**When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."**

**His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."**

**Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons.**

**Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from — although the servers who had drawn the water knew —, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now."**

**Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.**

The verse with which the narration concludes gives us the key to interpreting the story: "Thus, in Cana of Galilee Jesus began his signs, manifested his glory, and the faith of his disciples in him grew." The transformation of water into wine is a "sign" that evokes a deeper and more mysterious reality that can only be grasped in faith.

"The mother of Jesus told her: They have no wine left": Mary intervenes waiting for Jesus' action, but receives a harsh response: And it is that kinship ties can neither stop nor start her mission.

Although attempts have often been made to extract from this passage an intercessory power of Mary, rather the absolute sovereignty and freedom of Jesus is emphasized. "Do whatever he tells you": Mary must place herself in the recognition of this sovereignty and in the trust of faith: only from this position will the miracle be possible.

The definitive "hour" of Jesus is the moment of the cross, where he will fully manifest his glory (Jn 12,28) and give up the Spirit, opening to humanity the totality of the messianic goods of salvation. The sign of Cana is an anticipation, a preliminary unveiling of the fullness of salvation in the glorification of him on the cross, when he will deliver the Spirit to his disciples.

The abundant wine of Cana represents "the truth" brought by Jesus, in opposition to the sterile ritualism and ineffective legalism into which the old covenant had fallen. Wine is a symbol of Christ himself. Its origin, in fact, is mysterious ("the steward tasted the water turned into wine without knowing where it came from"). Jesus is the "new wine" par excellence, the fullness of salvation and of God's messianic gifts.

- (1) Read John 1:17. Analyze the two comparisons and develop a conclusion.
- (2) Three events mark (according to different evangelists) the beginning of the divine mission of Jesus Christ: The miracle in Cana, The Baptism of Jesus, The star that led the Magi. Compare and comment with the group.
- (3) The change from water to wine in this story is impressive. What other things would you ask the Lord to change?



### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have been blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father .....**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*