

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

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.



Pause for **THREE** seconds
then look up at the people
and say SLOWLY:

The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Brothers and sisters:

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.

Pause for **THREE** seconds
then look up at the people
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING – C 02

The Lord be with you.

And also with your spirit.

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

On the third day 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.



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE IN DEPTH

Reading I: Isaiah 62:1-5

This excerpt comes from a section of Third Isaiah that consists of songs celebrating the return from exile. The subject of the present song is the restored city of Jerusalem. God is now rejoicing over the city as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

While this reading comes from a section appropriate for any festival season, it is clearly intended to match the gospel (the wedding at Cana), for it uses nuptial imagery to depict the relationship between YHWH and Israel—a familiar tradition since Hosea.

The speaker in verse 1 is the prophet. His style and vocabulary suggest that he was a pupil of Second Isaiah. His master had prophesied the return from exile. That return had doubtless now taken place, but Jerusalem has not yet been rebuilt (see Haggai and Nehemiah).

The prophet, however, is undaunted and is still convinced that his master's predictions will be completely fulfilled. So he refuses to keep silent or to rest (in intercession for Jerusalem) until God vindicates the city.

The writer then expresses the restoration of Jerusalem in three pictures:

(1) It will be a crown and a diadem in the hand of YHWH. It has been suggested that this image derives from the ancient Near Eastern practice of depicting the god of a city wearing a crown patterned after the city walls.

(2) The city will be given a new name:
“My delight is in her” = Hephziba, a girl's name in Hebrew.

(3) The nuptial imagery already noted.

Note the bold mixture of images: your sons will marry you (!); then YHWH will rejoice over Jerusalem as a bride. We should not press this imagery too closely. The general idea is clear enough.

Responsorial Psalm: 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10

The first two stanzas of this psalm are used each year at the midnight Mass of Christmas, and practically the same selection of verses is used in a slightly different arrangement on the twenty-ninth Sunday of the year in series A.

As well as being a psalm generally suitable for festivals, it has a strong missionary note, brought out here by the refrain: “Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.”

Reading II: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

This reading overlaps with the second reading on Pentecost Sunday. The selection for that day comprised three sections: (1) confession of Jesus as Lord; (2) the varieties of gifts [abbreviated]; (3) diversity and unity within the body.

Today the first section is dropped; the second is given in full, specifying the varieties of gifts; and the third will form the beginning of next Sunday's second reading.

Note first the artless triadic structure of verses 4-6:

charismata—the Spirit
service [diakonai]—the Lord [= Christ]
workings [energemata =functions] —God

Paul's intention here is in part polemical, directed against the Corinthian Gnostics, who overemphasized the importance of some of the gifts, especially speaking in tongues.

The Apostle prefers the term charismata to the term pneumatika ("spiritual things"), for it emphasizes that the gifts are gifts of grace (charis), not natural endowments to be proud of. The word "service" (diakonia) strikes a polemical note to be taken up later in the development of the image of the body.

The Corinthians thought that the gifts existed for their own glory rather than for the service of the community. Since it is the same triune God who is at work in all of them, no gift can be exalted above any other.

Verse 7 then sums up verses 4-6 and serves as a heading for verses 8-10: every spiritual phenomenon is given for the common good. Verses 8-10 spell out the charismata, listing nine in all: (1) wisdom, (2) knowledge (gnosis), (3) faith, (4) healing, (5) miracle-working, (6) prophecy, (7) discernment of spirits, (8) tongues, (9) interpretation of tongues.

The gifts fall into three groups: (I) wisdom and knowledge; (II) faith, healing, and miracle-working; (III) prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

I. Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians there is hardly any perceptible difference between wisdom and knowledge. Both refer to gifts that the Corinthian Gnostics claimed to possess, and criticized Paul for not having.

II. Faith here does not mean the faith by which all Christians respond to the gospel and so are justified, but a special gift confined to some. It is connected with miracle-working.

III. Prophecy does not require interpretation, for it is not unintelligible speech; but it requires the discerning of spirits—to see whether it is genuine or false prophecy. In verse

1 Paul has already set up the criterion: whether the prophecy confesses Jesus as Lord or says anathema lesous.

Verse 11 rounds off the list by repeating the substance of verse 7 and prepares for the ensuing section on the churches as the body of Christ: one Spirit—one body.

Gospel: John 2:1-11

The view is gaining ground that the Fourth Gospel used a source consisting mainly of miracle stories, that is, an “aretalogy” (for the name see Sirach 36:14: “wondrous deeds” in the RSV).

Its purpose was to use a series of stupendous miracles to convince potential converts that Jesus was the Messiah (see John 20:30, probably the conclusion of the aretalogy). It was therefore a missionary writing.

Its basic conception was that Jesus was the messianic prophet, recalling Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, as these were interpreted in later Judaism, that is, as “divine men.” In short, it was designed as a missionary tract to convert Greek-speaking Jews to Christianity.

The evangelist, as distinct from the aretalogist, wrote at a later time, when Christians had been expelled from the Jewish synagogue. His purpose was not to convert but to force a decision upon Jewish Christians who were concealing their faith in order to avoid expulsion from the synagogue.

So he incorporates the earlier aretalogy into his Gospel, adding glosses to the miracle stories, expanding them with dialogues and discourses, and combining the whole with a passion and resurrection narrative.

In this way he sets before his readers the purpose of Christ’s coming into the world—to bring about a krisis, a decision between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death.

Unlike most of the other signs in the Fourth Gospel, the story of the wedding at Cana has no dialogue or discourse attached to it by the evangelist; rather, he has contented himself with a few extra touches.

These may be identified as follows: verse 4 (especially “My hour has not yet come”); verse 6b (“for the Jewish rites of purification”); verse 11c (“and manifested his glory”).

Each of these additions serves to link the Cana miracle with the passion story: the hour, for the evangelist, is the hour of the passion; the Jewish rites of purification are replaced by the messianic purification accomplished on the cross (see 1 John 1:7: “the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin”); the cross is the supreme moment of Jesus’ glorification.

In effect, what the evangelist is saying is that we are not to take the Cana miracle as a direct and complete epiphany of Christ's glory.

Though the evangelist accepts the reality of the miracle, it has for him a further, symbolic significance, pointing toward what Jesus is to accomplish on the cross.

There the older will be replaced by new. This is what the changing of the water into wine symbolizes. The real, final epiphany is the cross.

Reginald H. Fuller