

Here's a text if you've only a minute ...

As the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,
so will your God rejoice in you.

First Reading

Proclaim the wonders of the Lord among all the peoples. *Psalms*

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

Almighty and ever-present Father,
your watchful care reaches from end to end
and orders all things in such power
that even the tensions and the tragedies of sin
cannot frustrate your loving plans.

Help us to embrace your will,
give us the strength to follow your call,
so that your truth may live in our hearts
and reflect peace to those who believe in your love.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's readings:

Isaiah 62: 1-5; Psalm 95 (96); 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11; John: 2: 1-11



What is Jesus
asking me
to do?

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ST. BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year C, 20th January 2019

**'Your words are Spirit, Lord,
and they are life.'**

We begin the Sundays of Ordinary Time in Year C with readings that remind us of God's eternal relationship of love for his people. The imagery of a wedding as a symbol of that everlasting bond is used in both the First Reading and the Gospel.

The Prophet Isaiah paints a poetic picture of how the Jewish people in exile will be delivered from their suffering. God delights in his people and the intimacy of that love is compared to the way that a bridegroom rejoices in his bride. (**First Reading**)

This relationship of rejoicing is mirrored in the way that the **Psalms** describes his love for God.

In the **Second Reading**, the Church in Corinth hears how God's Spirit of love is at work in each of them, in very different ways. There are many gifts and talents in the community, but they are united in this one Spirit. Paul would later teach the Corinthians that Christ is married to the Church.

This first **Gospel** reading of Ordinary Time is from the Gospel of John. The wedding at Cana sets the scene for the beginning of Jesus's ministry in the world. This passage is full of symbolic meaning. Although the scene is a wedding, the imagery is not of Jesus as bridegroom, but as a guest who brings new wine to the wedding feast. He will fulfil the promises of the old prophets. Later he will become the bridegroom who rejoices in his bride, the Church.

Let us pray that we will be drawn into a deeper relationship with the God who rejoices in each one of us.

Opening Prayer

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.

Second Reading 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 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.

I place myself before God and ask for the grace that his Spirit will guide my time of prayer. It may help my prayer to light a candle and focus on the warm light, or to bring to mind an image that reminds me of God's love for me.

I allow time for my thoughts and body to settle as best they can.

When I feel ready, I read the passage slowly, pausing and reflecting wherever I feel drawn.

I ponder on the words or phrases that I have chosen. I talk to the Lord as I would to a trusted friend about why I have chosen these words to pray with.

Paul wrote this letter to help the growing church in Corinth. I imagine that Paul writes to *me* as a member of my church community, or prayer group, or wherever I express my faith.

I read the letter again, reflecting on the different aspects of my faith, and expressing gratitude for the people who share their gifts of the Spirit with me.

What are my own gifts of the Spirit?

How do I express those gifts in my community?

Is there anything that holds me back from living out my life in the Spirit?

I ask God for whatever I need to express more fully the gifts of the Spirit which I am called to share with others.

When I feel ready, I bring my prayer to a close with my own words of thanks. I finish by slowly praying: *Glory be to the Father ...*

Gospel 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, 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.

I prepare to pray by allowing myself to become still and silent before God.

I read the Gospel slowly and prayerfully.

I use my imagination to enter the wedding feast at Cana. I may choose to be a guest, a disciple or one of the servants. I use all my senses to bring the feast alive in my mind.

What do I see, hear, smell, touch, and taste?

What do I feel as I take part in the celebrations?

When Mary turns towards her son, asking him to help at the feast, what do I notice about their relationship?

As I see what happens next, what is my reaction to witnessing this miracle, or 'sign'? I ask Jesus to explain the deeper meaning of his actions at the feast.

I read the passage slowly, once more.

This time, when Mary says, 'Do whatever he tells you', I imagine she speaks these words to *me*, in the midst of *my* life.

What is Jesus asking me to do? How am I to respond?

Whenever I feel ready, I finish my prayer by making a slow sign of the cross.