

## January 19th, Proper 2

### Opening Prayers:

In you, O Lord our God, we find our joy  
for we are the people you formed  
in mercy and freedom,  
justice and righteousness.

Keep us open to your Spirit in our midst  
that we who are Christ's body  
proclaim the Good News  
of your release to captives,  
sight to the blind,  
freedom to the oppressed,  
and the favour of your salvation  
for the whole world.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit is one God,  
now and for ever

**Isaiah 62:1-5:** *Persia conquered Babylon and let captive Israel return to a small patch of land around Jerusalem. Their elation turned to despair when they saw the desolation of the place and they felt as if God has abandoned them again. Previously the prophet assured them there would be a new Jerusalem and that foreigners would come – not to destroy, but to build the holy city! He went on to say that all the nations of the world would see God's glory reflected in them and that they would receive a new name (as Abram and Sarai did when God chose them) because God is going to be as close to them as married people are to each other.*

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.

**1 Corinthians 12:1-11:** *It would seem there were questions in the Church at Corinth concerning spiritual gifts (perhaps wondering if some gifts are greater than others? perhaps questions as to their origin? we do not really know). Paul wrote that all gifts are given by the Father through the Spirit – not for the singular benefit of the recipient but to build up the common good. Listen for a beginning understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity (“...same Spirit, ...same Lord, ...same God”).*

Concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says ‘Let Jesus be cursed!’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit.

Now 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.

**John 2:1-11:** *This is Jesus’ first miracle – turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana. There is a lot of symbolism here. The water used here wasn’t for drinking but for the ritual of purification either before the meal or for the bride. In the same*

*way, Jesus ended his ministry providing a wine that purifies – not just Israel but the whole world!*

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 twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, ‘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. Jesus entered the water of John’s baptism and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove. And the voice of the Father confirms it with spoken word: “This is my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” Again, water, Word and Spirit come together. This is the beloved Son of the Father who is in the water, upon whom the Spirit descends. He is the Christ, the Anointed One of God, come to save His people and the world from Sin and Death. He is the suffering Servant of God, in whom is God’s delight, who bears the sins of the many and by whose wounds we are healed from the sting of Death. Water alone cannot wash away Sin. Water alone cannot bring the Spirit down from heaven. Water alone cannot tear the heavens open and bring the voice of the Father.

*“On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee.” Mary, the mother of Jesus, is there along with her Son and his new disciples. On the third day – the creative day in which the Word called forth vegetation, including the grape, from the earth. The third day, the day of fulfillment and resurrection. “Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up again.” On the third day big and important things happen. Got it? Good!*

*At Cana in Galilee. Not in Jerusalem, not in the temple, not in Rome, the seat of political power. In lowly Cana, in backwoods Galilee in the north, despised, looked down upon, a land of half-breed Israelites and religious heretics. “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light,” the prophet Isaiah said. “On those dwelling in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.” In the circle of the*

*Gentiles, Galilee of the nations. That's where Jesus first shows His glory, at Cana in Galilee.*

*It's all set up perfectly. The location, the timing, the event – a wedding. What better event than a wedding? God often referred to his relationship with Israel in terms of bridegroom and bride. “As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.” And this is a wedding with an impending disaster. The wine had run out prematurely. It was a social gaffe beyond bad. No more wine and the feast was still going on. Maybe it was due to an unexpected number of guests. Perhaps it was Jesus' disciples.*

*Mary gets involved. “They have no wine,” she says to Jesus. And Jesus appears to be rather snippy toward her and the whole affair. ‘Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.’ It's a strange way of putting it. First, Jesus seems rude to his mother, but he actually isn't. Hyper-respectful, certainly. But not rude. He does not address her as mother, and does not permit her to pull her apron strings on him. He is Lord to her, even as she is his mother. Women is a title of respect and dignity, a formality, like Madam. The next time Jesus addresses Mary this way is at the cross where he entrusts her to the care of John. “Woman, behold thy son.”*

*“Do whatever he tells you,” Mary says to the servants. You would be wise to heed Mary's advice, “Do whatever Jesus tells you.” For example: “Trust in me.” “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” “This is my body, my blood....Do this in remembrance of me.”*

*Truly God has saved the very best for last. For now. For you. “The Law came through Moses, but grace and truth through Jesus Christ.” And you, as baptized believers, are privileged to taste and see that the Lord is good, to sample His vintage, and have a foretaste of a marriage feast that never ends but goes on forever. You are part of it; you are in on it. Like those surprised guests at Cana in Galilee who got to drink wine from heaven that day because Jesus was among them.*

*Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

### **Concluding Prayers**

Let us pray for the people of God, loved wholly by God and sent to be light in the world. We pray for Charles, our king, those who govern in this country and in all the nations of the world.

Let us pray for all who are persecuted, shunned, neglected, or rejected because of prejudice, that they may find welcoming love in our communities of faith,

Let us pray for those in committed relationships and their families, for those who are single and their families, that they may share the joy and love of God for all,

Let us pray for all members of our communities, that we may recognize the gifts we have received from the Spirit and use them freely for the good of all,

Let us pray for all members of the church community, including the sick, the dying, and those who mourn.

God of wonders,  
in the hour of his crucifixion  
you have revealed your glory in Jesus Christ  
and summoned all humanity  
to find communion in him.  
Show to your people  
the power of your Spirit to glorify and transform.  
We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**For our Parish.**

O GOD the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful:  
Sanctify this parish by thine abiding presence  
especially at this time when some feel they cannot gather together.  
Enlighten the minds of thy people more and more  
with the light of the everlasting Gospel.  
Bring erring souls to the knowledge of God our Saviour;  
and those who are walking in the way of life,  
keep steadfast unto the end.

Give patience to the sick and afflicted,  
and renew them in body and soul.  
Guard from forgetfulness of thee those who are strong and prosperous.  
Increase in us thy manifold gifts of grace,  
and make us all to be fruitful in good works;  
O blessed Spirit, whom with the Father and the Son together  
we worship and glorify, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

### **Lord's Prayer**

Our Father,  
who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:  
And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,  
be amongst you and remain with you always. *Amen*