

1-11-2022

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - 16 January 2022

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Recommended Citation

Tedesco, Joe. "2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - 16 January 2022." *Pastoral Liturgy* 52, no. 1 (2001): 1-6.
<https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy/vol52/iss1/28>

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16 January 2022

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

Introduction

The readings of this Sunday continue from last week's celebration of the Baptism of the Lord. Together, they express the start of Jesus' public ministry, the work of revealing God who comes to serve and save all.

Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you show us the power of your love so that we can trust you.
Lord, have mercy.

You came to show us your love and supply all our needs.
Christ, have mercy.

You have shown us your glory so that we can believe.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect

*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.*

The community invokes God in light of its faith that everything in heaven, and at the same time everything on earth, falls under the divine. The sense of 'govern' includes the harmony that comes from God ruling all things within their own rhythm and measure. It also carries the understanding that God's rulership is grounded in the love and fidelity that the creator has towards creation itself. It resonates with the conviction that through Christ all things were made, named as good, restored and are continually guarded. This pairing of 'heaven' and 'earth' also connotes God's use of the celestial and the earthly for the sake of salvation. From all this emerges the community's confidence that we will hear and respond with that self-same mercy.

The second petition is for peace in the present. The invocation of divine mercy sets this peace within the context of the peace that Christ has wrought. More particularly, on earth the prayer tradition links this with inner peace, freedom from sin, righteous living, and the absence of civil strife. It is a foretaste of eternal life, which itself is marked by light, truth and communion with the saints. This is a great prayer with which to begin the new year.

First Reading

Isaiah 62:1–5.

God will not keep silent and will not rest until God's saving activity is complete. The Lord will crown the people with all of God's joy and blessings.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 95:1–3, 7–10

Proclaim his marvellous deeds to all the nations.

This psalm is one of great praise. God has done wonderful things for all of creation and so all creatures return the divine love with exuberant praise.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 12:4–11

God blesses universally, but not identically. All are called to bring their particular giftedness to manifest the Spirit of God for a common good.

Gospel Reading

John 2:1–11

The miracle at the wedding of Cana marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. It is a vivid image of the abundance that Christ has to offer and the first of several signs that will show God's blessedness.

Reflection

This time of year is an interesting experience relative to the liturgical calendar. With the main feasts and celebrations of Christmas done, the festive hustle and bustle leading up to and during that period passes and for many these early weeks of January feel like a time to exhale and to get back into a more regular rhythm with more familiar patterns of life re-emerging.

Religiously, Christmas is often a time where our attention to God's revelation in history is brought to the fore in more significant ways. We can become more aware of God's saving nature and God's will and action to bring peace, hope and joy to all as we go through Christmas. However, by this time of year, that sentiment can already begin to fade as those more familiar patterns of life return.

This is especially so for those who might not be so regularly engaged with their Christian faith. Life goes on and we might return to the story of God at Easter, maybe next Christmas, but, otherwise, it can all become a bit 'out of sight and out of mind'. This is not to criticise the secular world we live in. Even those of us who are more overtly connected to our Christian faith can get caught in the 'humdrum' of life and simply 'go through the motions' of regular religious activity. However, even if we might move away from focussing on God's activity in the world as our lives get back to 'normal, that does not mean God has stopped moving in and through creation, continuing God's saving activity. The first reading provides a neat reflection on this.

It is an interesting feature of the Year C cycle which we are in that the first reading for today is identical to the first reading of the Christmas Vigil Mass. The reading from Isaiah speaks of a God who "will not be silent" and "will not grow weary" (62:1). The Hebrew word *hāšā* translated as 'silent' in the Lectionary not only means quiet but also inactive or calm. Isaiah's choice of words implies a restlessness that needs to be satiated with voice and action. The second clause of 'not growing weary', featuring the Hebrew *šeqet*, is probably better translated as at rest, calm or at peace. The notion is that God is agitated and cannot but be active until all that God seeks to accomplish is complete.

And what does God seek to accomplish? To remove desolation from God's people, to bring life and peace to us and to creation. The reading from Isaiah opens the Christmas Day liturgies because the birth of Jesus is the evidence of this 'restlessness' of God bursting forth in God's presence among us. However, this is not a one-off event that happened a long time ago and is done. It is aptly used again today to remind us that God is still 'restless' and keenly unpeaceful because God's saving work is not yet complete. We still are on the journey to the fullness of salvation that Jesus has made possible, and, as long as that journey continues, God will be about working for, with and through us such that we find complete joy. God will not rest until the whole story is done.

This language of urgency that opens the first reading contrasts, in certain sense at least, the lack of urgency we see in Jesus in the Gospel reading. When Jesus is made aware of the issue at the feast, Jesus appears to dismiss it. As with much of John's dialogue, the back and forth in the story is highly symbolic and much of the interaction between Jesus and his mother is something of a literary device to highlight a theological point. It is well held that, in this case, how Jesus responds indicates that to engage in what the situation calls for is to begin the full revelation of Jesus' nature and mission. That is what is meant when Jesus responds with "my hour has not come yet" (2:4). 'The hour' in the New Testament and especially in John refers to the central moment and mission of Jesus' life centred on the events of

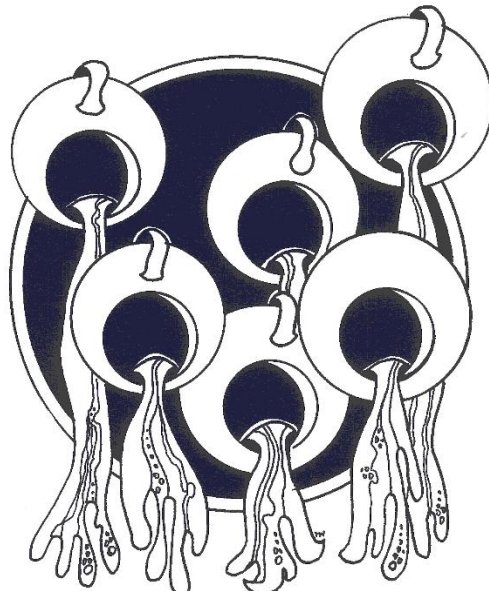
Easter. To engage in what appears to be asked of Jesus is to bring that moment into view and begin the process of this saving act.

Leaving the finer detail of the theological imagery aside, what is well noted is that Jesus' apparent reluctance is met with a decided faith on behalf of his mother and this faith is rewarded with the abundant blessing of the 'finest wine'. This anticipates many features of John's teaching; the reward of engaged and trusting belief, the incredibly abundant blessing of Jesus, and the foretelling of the 'great banquet' that all are called to.

We, like the guests and Jesus' mother in the Gospel story, sit between the revelation of God in the person of Jesus and the fullness of blessing that is to be found at the end of our individual and collective lives. We sit in a place where God has blessed, but where the blessing is still coming.

Whatever we're experiencing now, this is not as good as it gets. As witnessed in the wedding at Cana, our Lord never rests and is ever at work turning our difficult situations into abundant blessings. Like the guests, we too can look forward to a place where we find the 'good wine' ahead of, rather than behind us, where most might expect it to have been.

We are encouraged today to not feel that God's actions are all done, a thing of the past, of some better and more holy day. Living lives of hope and faith, we recognise that God has not finished with us, and our Lord will not rest or remain silent until all that God desires for us is complete.



**You have kept
the best wine
until now.** Jn 2:10

Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

Isaiah tells us that God takes delight in Zion, and we know that God takes delight in us so we offer to God our needs.

Petitions

We pray for the leaders of our Church, particularly Pope Francis, that they will remain strong in faith and spirit as they lead us to be a delight to God. May the Synod of Bishops for 2023 be a time of growth and renewal for the Church.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders of the world that they will allow all people of religious belief to proclaim in freedom the marvellous deeds of God. May they lead their people in justice and compassion as all nations continue to struggle through COVID-19.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for people of all gifts that they will use their gifts in the service of the community as described by St Paul. May we recognise the gifts of those in our community who are differently abled and share their delight in God.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who are married or about to be married that they will have both Mary and Jesus spiritually present at their wedding as in Cana.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who are suffering in our community that we can in generosity reach out to help them and bring them to the knowledge of God's marvellous deeds.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those suffering because of the pandemic. We pray that the frontline workers will be kept safe and well and continue to have the strength to help all in need. We pray also for those who grieve for family members who have died in isolation, that they will find peace.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, we know that you listen to our petitions and that we will be transformed by your love and so we bring these prayers to you through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

Amen.

Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA

Baptised in water. M. Seward/ Gaelic melody. 179
Gift of finest wheat. O. Westendorf/ R. Kreutz. 191
God in the planning. J. L. Bell/Irish Traditional Melody. 220
Lord, you give the great commission. J. Rowthorn/C. V. Taylor. 313
O Christ the great foundation. S. S. Wesley. 483
Shepherd me, O God. M. Haugen. 24
There is one Lord. J. Berthier. 346
This day God gives me. J. Quinn SJ/ Gaelic Melody. 840
The Church's one foundation. S. S. Wesley. 484
We are many parts. M. Haugen. 523

AOV1

Shepherd me, O God. M. Haugen. 33
We are many parts. M. Haugen. 86

AOV2

Bridegroom and bride. J. L. Bell/Irish Traditional Melody. 42
Praise to the Lord, the almighty. C. Winkworth/ German Chorale. 132
There is one Lord. O. Alstott. 148

AOV4Kids

We live and love your word. K. Bates SM. 118

CWB

All you nations, sing out your joy. Lucien Deiss. 616
Filled with the Spirit's power, with one accord. John Raphael Peacey. 676

CWBII

Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions

The gift of the Holy Spirit. Kathleen T. Boschetti. 112
Gifts of the Spirit. John L. Bell and Graham Maule. 113
Songs of thankfulness and praise. Christopher Wordsworth. 279
All you nations, sing out your joy to the Lord. Lucien Deiss, CSSp. 347
Jesus, come! for we invite you. Christopher Idle. 527

Additional selections by Chris deSilva

Gifts of the Spirit. Christopher Willcock SJ. 383
Filled with the Spirit's power. John R. Peacey. 385

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 95: *Proclaim his marvellous deeds to all the nations.*
Psalm 95: Robert Twynam/A. Gregory Murray OSB. CWB 354
Psalm 96 (95): Jenny O'Brien. JOBC pg. 56
Proclaim his marvellous deeds. LPC Marty Haugen pg.84

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Sing out with joy (FWS) *based on Ps 65(66)* [Gathering]
Sing new songs of joy (FWS/CWB II) *based on Ps 97 (98)* [Gathering, Recessional]
Holy Spirit, come (TCS) [Gifts, Reflection]
Come, O come, Holy Spirit (TWB)
Hearts on fire (SHOF/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]