

17<sup>th</sup> January 2010,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Year (C)

## **This Week's Readings**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 62: 1-5.**

This Reading is taken from the second part of Isaiah (6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.). Here the Prophet is singing to the restored Jerusalem, the Delight of God, the Lord's Bride. This idea of God rejoicing over his bride Jerusalem serves as helpful background to today's Gospel.

### **Second Reading: 1Corinthians 22: 4-11.**

Each year we begin this series of Sundays of the Year by reading from Paul's timely first letter to the Corinthians. Paul, concerned about jealousies among the Lord's followers, here reminds them that any job or talent in the Church comes from the Holy Spirit. Notice the reference to speaking in tongues.

### **Gospel: John 2: 1-12.**

Jesus turns water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana. This is his first miracle.

## **Points for Reflection**

Today's Scripture Readings (**the First Reading and the Gospel**) invite us to meditate on God's love for us and on our love for God.

In the Bible this mutual love is often described as a nuptial love. God is the bridegroom and mankind is the bride (see the **First Reading**).

1. In the Old Testament God reveals himself as a faithful bridegroom of his people. The covenant he establishes with the People of Israel has taken the characteristics of nuptial love. He chooses the Israelites because he loves them, and his love for them is exactly as a bridegroom's love for his bride: just as intimate and exclusive. To God's faithfulness the Israelites have often responded with betrayals and unfaithfulness. God, however, has always been true to his love for them, because he wanted his love to become the sign of his love for all mankind, the sign of his marriage to mankind.
2. It is with the coming of Jesus that God shows his determination to establish a new and everlasting covenant of love with mankind.
  - John the Baptist indicates in Jesus the Bridegroom and shares the joy of the wedding (John 3:29).
  - Jesus himself reveals that he has inaugurated the era of the wedding of the Messiah: his disciples are not supposed to fast as long as the Bridegroom is with them (Mt 9:15).
  - At Cana, by changing water into wine at the wedding, he works a very eloquent sign: the era of the Messiah has come, the time of God's marriage to mankind is at hand. "*The hour*", of which Jesus speaks, as we know, came when he was exalted on the Cross. On the Cross Jesus revealed to its fullness God's love for his unfaithful Bride, and purified her, preparing her for the new covenant, which was sealed in his blood. From the open side of Jesus came out his Bride, the new Eve, the Church, and, indeed, all mankind.
3. We, too, have been invited to the wedding of Christ to his Church. We, too, are Christ's Bride. After the People of Israel, in fact, all men and women are called to share God's infinite and merciful love and to love him in return.
  - We cannot doubt God's love for us. At times we might be tempted to do so, as the Israelites did. When things go differently from the way we would like them to go, we are usually inclined to think that they went in the wrong way, and to blame God for this. God's love for us is not something we can see and

judge by our human standards of seeing and judging. It is something we accept by faith. And if our faith is strong enough, we will come to admit that God's love for us is the surest reality in our lives: it is at the origin of our own existence, the only reason for our going on living, and the only foundation of our hope...

- What we should rather bother about is our faithfulness to God's love. But what criteria do we have to judge whether we are true to God or not? St John suggests an unmistakable one: the love for our brethren. *"We are to love, then, because he loved first. Anyone who says: 'I love God', and hates his brother, is a liar, since a man, who does not love the brother he can see, cannot love God, whom he has never seen. So this is the commandment that he has given us, that anyone who loves God must also love his brother (1 John, 4: 19-21).* By the way we love those people who are dear to us, or whom we meet in our daily lives, or whom we are supposed to care for (the needy, the lonely, the suffering...) can we truly say that we love God, that we are the faithful Bride of Jesus our Lord? The Eucharistic Banquet we share today may give us new insight and new strength in our determination to be always faithful witnesses to the infinite and merciful love of God for us.