



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION  
SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 2025 – Epiphany 2**

**COLLECT**

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Psalm 36, verses 5-10**

5 Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens ♦  
and your faithfulness to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness stands like the strong mountains,  
your justice like the great deep; ♦  
you, Lord, shall save both man and beast.

7 How precious is your loving mercy, O God! ♦  
All mortal flesh shall take refuge  
under the shadow of your wings.

8 They shall be satisfied with the abundance of your house; ♦  
they shall drink from the river of your delights.

9 For with you is the well of life ♦  
and in your light shall we see light.

10 O continue your loving-kindness to those who know you ♦  
and your righteousness to those who are true of heart.

## **A reading from the first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 1-11.**

### **1 Corinthians 12.1-11**

#### **Spiritual Gifts**

Now 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:**

The second reading is from John, chapter 2, verses 1-11

**and then at the end:**

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an *Acclamation (the blue bit)*, and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):**

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

Christ was revealed in flesh, proclaimed among the nations and believed in throughout the world.

**Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, Chapter 2, verses 1-11.

**Glory to you, O Lord**

**And then at the end:**

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **John 2.1-11**

### **The Wedding at Cana**

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.

## ***A Reflection from Hannah...***

What are we about? Well, the world around us can tell us all sorts of stories of what being a Christian means, or what being a member of the Church means. Some of them true, some of them not so much! And the image, the caricature even, of what being a 'churchgoer' looks like can often be a rather miserable one. In most dramas on the telly, we appear straightlaced and judgemental, often with something to hide. If you think of the last time you saw a vicar in a drama for example, it was probably not the most positive portrayal!

We could muse on the question of whether it's fair to portray Christians in this way... but perhaps a more helpful question is, is it a true reflection of how we are? Is it true to say that the lot of a Christian is to be dour, devoid of fun and quick to judge? Well, one thing we do know is that it is not the Gospel! If history has steered us down this rather unfortunate path, then the miracle described in the wedding of Cana gives us a good leg-up in putting right some wrongs. Our faith is an earthly one- it is about joy, hope and flourishing in the here and now. One writer on early Christianity (Peter Brown) notes that this was certainly clear in the first centuries after Jesus' resurrection:

'Early Christianity was this-worldly, life-affirming and optimistic.'

Well, you can't get more 'this-worldly' than a far-gone wedding party that's fast running out of wine! And into this very real crisis of community and reputation comes Jesus' first miracle. A miracle that simply ensures that the celebration continues- it might not be about the more harrowing facets of human experience, but it is, nevertheless, a deep moment. It challenges our assumptions about faith being so serious that it becomes humourless and dry. Our faith is... or at least should be... anything but! Joining in with the mission of God means joining in with heaven on earth and, through prayer and being the body of Christ together, helping the good things of God to grow. Good things that include fun in our lives together. As Irenaeus of Lyon said 'The Church is planted as a paradise in this world'.

In many ways, it's brilliant that we recall the wedding at Cana on the same weekend as the Montford and Shrawardine Pantomime. We might assume that the panto is an 'aside' to our life together as church communities- a helpful fundraiser, hilarious and appreciated, but nothing holy. Well, that's absolutely **not** true! Our faith is about the here and now; it's about recognising the importance of joy in our lives together; our interdependence and the gift that we each are to the whole. That sounds like the panto to me! The wonder of the Gospel is that everywhere is holy- there is nothing outside the loving action of God at work in the world for our blessing. And every time we see one another using our gifts to be part of that mission (as our first reading encourages us to do), we give thanks.