

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

All the earth shall bow down before you,  
O God,  
and shall sing to you,  
shall sing to your name, O Most High!

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**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.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Is 62:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

About Zion I will not be silent,  
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,  
until her integrity shines out like the dawn  
and her salvation flames like a torch.  
The nations then will see your integrity,  
all the kings your glory,  
and you will be called by a new name,  
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.  
You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand  
of the Lord,  
a princely diadem in the hand of your God; no  
longer are you to be named 'Forsaken',  
nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be  
called 'My Delight' and your land 'The Wedded';  
for the Lord takes delight in you and your land  
will have its wedding.

Like a young man marrying a virgin,  
so will the one who built you wed you,  
and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride,  
so will your God rejoice in you.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM**

Ps 95 (96):1-3, 7-10

Response:

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

1. O sing a new song to the Lord,  
sing to the Lord all the earth.  
O sing to the Lord, bless his name. (R.)
2. Proclaim his help day by day,  
tell among the nations his glory  
and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)
3. Give the Lord, you families of peoples,  
give the Lord glory and power,  
give the Lord the glory of his name. (R.)
4. Worship the Lord in his temple.  
O earth, tremble before him.  
Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.'  
He will judge the peoples in fairness. (R.)

**SECOND READING**

1 Co 12:4-11

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the  
Corinthians

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 him 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.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia! Your words are spirit, Lord,  
And they are life:  
you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL**

Jn 2:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
John

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, since the wine provided for  
the wedding was all finished, 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

**I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;**

**through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,**

*(all bow during the next three lines)*

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray,  
that we may participate worthily in these  
mysteries,  
for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is  
celebrated  
the work of our redemption is accomplished.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**You have prepared a table before me,  
and how precious is the chalice that  
quenches my thirst.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love,  
and in your kindness  
make those you have nourished  
by this one heavenly Bread  
one in mind and heart.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## IN PRAISE OF STRONG WOMEN

JN 2:1-11



There can be few things more embarrassing than being at a wedding and the drink runs out. Everybody is having a great time, the band is playing, the celebration is in full swing, and then, horror of horrors, the bar runs dry. Imagine the anger and embarrassment of the wedding couple when the hotel manager tells them the awful news. It wouldn't be long before it would be splashed on social media.

We can identify with the Cana couple's predicament. We all know that life isn't perfect and that we need the help of others when difficulties come our way. In today's Gospel, Mary sees the problem and asks Jesus to help. He seems reluctant to intervene, but she is not put off. Mary knows her son won't let the wedding couple down, so she instructs the servants to do whatever he tells them.

In turning the water into wine Jesus works a miracle. He gives a sign, not because he wants to show how fantastic he is, but in order to meet someone's need. It reveals something of his identity. Although he is ready to argue that his time has not yet come, when called upon to help, he cannot say no. He comes to people in their need, as he always does. ■

## REFLECT

I come from a family of strong women. My maternal grandmother lived with us when I was growing up, and she had a tremendous influence on me. She had strong traditional values and always stressed the importance of family. She led the family prayers, and encouraged us to pray every day. She had a deep store of wisdom, which she sought to pass on to us, and a natural ability as a storyteller. Her diaries provide a wonderful insight into the Ireland of yesteryear. My grandmother taught me so much right up until she died the day after my seventeenth birthday.

Her daughter - my mother - was similar. Deep old age, she remained the heartbeat of our family. I was astonished by her selflessness, how time and again she spent herself for others. I marvelled at her wisdom and common sense, at her ability to grow and change, how her views and outlook matured over the years. I was struck by her unwavering faith, and by her capacity to forgive, to overcome even the deepest disappointments. She was a strong woman, just like her mother before her.

The story of the wedding at Cana has many levels of meaning. It's about the abundance

of God's gifts and God's extraordinary generosity. The water jars ended up brimming over with as much as 800 litres of wine (more than would be needed even at the most rumbustious Irish wedding!).

It's about transformation, being made new. The water is changed into wine. Our challenge also is to be made new.

It's about Jesus being revealed for who he really is - the Son of God, the Messiah, the prophet who can work wonderful signs.

And it's about a strong woman who offers advice to Jesus' followers about how to live if they are to be saved. That strong woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. She knows the wine is running out, she can see that the reception is heading for disaster for the bride and groom, and she decides to take action. She knows what to do. And even though Jesus protests that now is not the time, she refuses to take 'no' for an answer. She instructs the stewards, "Do whatever he tells you." And, like a good son, Jesus obeys his mother. He tells the stewards what to do - and the results are astonishing. The new wine is so good, the guests wonder why it wasn't served first.

## SAY

"Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life. You have the message of eternal life."

## DO

As this New Year begins, think of something you could do to change another person's life for the better.

## LEARN

Miracles happen when enough people have the faith to believe that change is possible

Mary instructs the servants: "Do whatever he tells you." That is the meaning of discipleship - to do whatever Jesus asks of us

## PRAY

Jesus' relationship with people transforms them. It changes their lives. Pray for yourself and your parish community that you will have a deeper relationship with the Lord.

"Do whatever he tells you" is what Mary tells the stewards at the wedding. It's the command she gives us too: "Do whatever he tells you." In other words, listen to Jesus, heed his word, follow his example. Do whatever he tells us, and our lives will be transformed. Do it, and we shall live.

What is Jesus asking of us this new year? Perhaps to take our lead from Mary and never to hesitate to turn to Jesus when in need. Perhaps to reach out in solidarity to those in material or financial difficulty, those who have no food, no wine. Perhaps he is asking us to look at our values and attitudes to see if they are in line with the Gospel. How might we need to be transformed, made new, in 2025? Perhaps it means never hesitating to offer a gentle word of support or comfort to someone in distress. Perhaps it means having the courage, like Mary, to speak out when we know something is wrong, whenever we encounter injustice.

"Do whatever he tells you." That's how that strong woman Mary lived. She lived by God's word. She spoke God's word. We are called to speak and live God's word, too. ■