

## **2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY ORD. (C)**

### **YOU SHALL BE CALLED MY DELIGHT**

**January 15/16, 2022**

One important way God expressed His relationship with the Israelites was like that of husband and wife. In the scriptures (e.g. Hosea, Song of songs, Ephesians), Israel was considered the bride of God. So, any time the Israelites offended God, it was considered as unfaithfulness to her spouse. It is clear that the relationship between husband and wife is closer than even between siblings. This tells us how God desires to be very close to His people, and He delights in them.

When being punished for her unfaithfulness, Israel was promised a new state of life, that she was not going to be under bondage again. She would be given a new name, and God would delight in her as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride. Israel would be special in the hand of the Lord. God would change her situation to the delight of nations and kings.

The hopeless situation the Israelites found themselves in while in exile is like what happened at the wedding at Cana. Jesus was asked by Mary, the “Queen Mother”, to help the couple. The wedding feast at Cana was also considered as Christ saving the Church by washing her clean with His own blood. This is what St. Paul told the Church in Ephesus, comparing the relationship between husband and wife with the relationship between Christ and the Church. “Christ loved the Church and sacrificed Himself for her to make her holy by washing her in cleansing water,” (Eph.5:25-26).

Since God never changes and Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, this relationship between God and man has not changed. This is the assurance we are given today. We often have different ideas about this relationship between God and us. We often consider it like the relationship between a servant or slave and his master. We fail to accept to be close to God and Jesus, His Son.

Because God wants us to have this close relationship with Him, He has sent us His Spirit through Christ to work within us, and to experience the unity binding the Trinity together. Each is given a different gift by the same Spirit to offer different service to the same Lord, and it is the same God who works within all of us. “To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for

some benefit". The benefit is to "knit God's holy people together for the work of service to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in faith and knowledge of the Son of God," (Eph.4:12-13). These gifts are also given to us to work to glorify God in all that we do; to heal, to teach, to preach, etc.

God knows our problems and the solutions to them more than we are aware of. Thus, He redeemed the Israelites, and it was like a dream to them; "When the Lord delivered Zion from captivity, it was like a dream; our mouths were filled with laughter, and our lips with songs," (Ps.126:1-2).

In a similar way, when there was a shortage of wine at the wedding feast, the bridegroom and the bride were not aware of it, but when the problem was solved by Christ, it was on them that praises were showered. They had no idea where the good wine came from. So, it is Christ who can solve our numerous problems we encounter every day in our lives. He can redeem and save us from all shame and disgrace.

God delights in you and me and He wants us to remember the marriage covenant we entered into with Him when we were baptized. He has given us a new wine, which is the Spirit, to make us strong and bold; a Spirit who will help us grow closer to Him. The gifts He has given us by the Spirit will enable us to serve others and to worship Him faithfully and sincerely. Giving us the Spirit is a sign of sharing with us His power to heal and do great things.