

[CMA 2019 Archbishop's Audio Homily]

**Based on the Lectionary readings for the
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 96

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

John 2:1-11

This is Archbishop Dennis Schnurr. The Scripture readings today invite us to discover anew God's abundant grace and to respond as members of God's family, the Lord's good and holy people.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah tells us that God desires a close relationship with us. We are called to respond to God's invitation and live so fully as the Lord's people that our lives witness to God's great love in the world.

The responsorial Psalm takes up the same theme:

Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.

Announce his salvation, day after day.

Tell his glory among the nations;

among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.

Living as people of faith—in our homes and as a Church—is a powerful witness to God's wondrous deeds.

Certainly, we know that so much of our world is in real need of hope, and our vocation to live as Christian people may seem daunting. We may believe that

we lack the resources or the power to make a difference. But we must pay special attention to the gospel account of the miracle at Cana. There is a reason that Jesus performed his first public miracle—his first demonstration of “God’s wondrous deeds”—in the setting of this most joyful human event. A wedding celebrates the beginning of a new family, the widening of God’s family. It is an occasion of hope and new life.

However at this particular wedding feast, the host runs out of wine—an embarrassment at best! Mary sees their need and responds to it. She asks her Son to do something and trusts He will do so. And, as a sign of God’s powerful, transforming love, Jesus changes ordinary water into the finest wine—not just enough wine to fill a few cups, but an overflowing abundance.

That is what God calls us to do as his family....for his family. We are to use the ordinary water of our own resources to pour out joy, healing, and transformation to a world in need. We need only be like the servants at the wedding feast of Cana, following Mary’s instructions: “Do whatever he tells you.”

Jesus tells us, as members of his Body, to feed the hungry. In our Archdiocese, we do as he tells us by putting food on the table for families endangered by poverty and unemployment. We feed the spiritual hungers of Catholics by supporting the formation of priests, deacons, and lay ministers, and by sending campus ministers to our universities.

Jesus tells us to visit the imprisoned and heal the sick. We support pastoral care in our prisons and hospitals, and healing education for those with communications disabilities. We also care for the needs of our retired priests.

Jesus tells us to welcome the stranger. We welcome refugees torn from their homeland by war and religious persecution. We assist women with crisis pregnancies, provide adoption support services to children and their families, and care for the elderly who are lonely.

We can do none of these by ourselves, as individuals or as parishes. That is why God calls us together, into communion with the Lord. Alone, we are just ordinary water. In Christ, we are transformed into a wine of hope and resurrection, poured out and shared in abundance.

One way we do this is through the annual Catholic Ministries Appeal, which supports six vital ministries in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. These ministries include:

**Catholic Charities and Catholic Social Services;
Campus, Hospital, and Prison ministries;
Our Seminary and Vocation programs;
St. Rita School for the Deaf;
Retired Archdiocesan Priests; and
New Evangelization Programs.**

Through the Catholic Ministries Appeal, we do much more than simply pledge financial support. We actually participate in these ministries. We

ourselves are feeding, teaching, and healing people in need throughout our local communities.

In our second reading today, St. Paul reminds the Corinthians—and us—that we have been given all that we have for a purpose.

**There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of service but the same Lord;
there are different workings but the same God
who produces all of them in everyone.**

**To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit
is given for some benefit.**

We all have gifts, entrusted to us by God. We are called to steward them well — to nurture them, and to make them fruitful, in the way in which we live our lives and follow the Lord. Through our service and giving, we follow the example of Mary, responding to the needs we see, using our gifts and sharing our resources on behalf of others -- trusting in God's providence in all things. We each contribute, not from our excess, but from our first fruits, as a sign of our love and gratitude to God who is the giver of all good gifts.

In closing, I realize that some may find it difficult to support the Catholic Ministries Appeal in light of the abuse crisis that surfaced again in the past months. First and foremost, the abuse of young people is morally reprehensible and cannot be tolerated anywhere by anyone. From the depths of my heart, I am sorry for the terrible pain and suffering experienced by

victims of abuse. No mere words can diminish the damage done; concrete actions must be taken to rebuild trust.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati is unequivocally committed to the protection of all people, children and adults. If you suspect abuse on the part of any agent of the Archdiocese, please report it to the appropriate civil authorities. If you see something, please say something.

In all of this, some may be feeling that Jesus has forsaken the Church. This is not true. Jesus established His Church on earth and promised to never leave us. Unfortunately, however, some members of the Church, including clergy, have forsaken Christ and their call to be disciples. I hope and pray that you will truly see Christ's presence in all the work of the CMA ministries.

As we begin this year's Catholic Ministries Appeal, I invite you to consider your response prayerfully. Remember the gifts you have been given, and how much we can do with the ordinary water of our lives when we do as Jesus tells us.

May God strengthen and bless us all as we glorify God and serve Christ through the Catholic Ministries Appeal.