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## THE BULLETIN – READINGS

20 January, Epiphany 3

Almighty God,  
whose Son revealed in signs and miracles  
the wonder of your saving presence:  
renew your people with your heavenly grace,  
and in all our weakness  
sustain us by your mighty power;  
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.

*(or)*

God of all mercy,  
your Son proclaimed good news to the poor,  
release to the captives,  
and freedom to the oppressed:  
anoint us with your Holy Spirit  
and set all your people free  
to praise you in Christ our Lord.

### **Isaiah 62:1-5: The Vindication and Salvation of Zion**

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.

The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will give.  
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.  
You shall no more be termed Forsaken,  
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;  
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,  
and your land Married;  
for the LORD delights in you,  
and your land shall be married.  
For as a young man marries a young woman,  
so shall your builder marry you,  
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,  
so shall your God rejoice over you.

### **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.

## **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.

**Readings for 27 January, Epiphany 4, are:  
Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21**

### **Treat words with care** *by Rodney Nicholson*

Words should be used with thought, not sloppily. They should not be abused by having their meaning twisted. To take one example, we hear the word, "shambles" or "shambolic", being used to mean "a mess" or "state of confusion". The word may have come to mean that, but it is disrespectful to the Shambles of York from which the term is taken. York Shambles is anything but a mess. It is a pride of the ancient city, being tidy and well-ordered, attracting visitors from all over the world.

Actually the Brexit negotiations are called a shambles, which they are not. People accuse politicians of not getting on with it, which is unfair. The whole issue is complicated and it would be wrong to seek to silence disagreement. MPs sincerely hold different views, which should be respected. By contrast, Church leaders, such as our two archbishops, and most clergy are “remainers”, though a few are “leavers”. Disagreement is allowed and does not make it “a shambles”- in the popular sense.

Take another example. It is fashionable today to describe someone you don't like as “bonkers”. It's a slang expression but some get rather attached to it. I knew an organist who liked to call a particular clergyman “bonkers”. “Bonkers” means “mad” or “deranged” and is therefore usually meaningless. People are rarely mad; they just see things differently from oneself. For that matter, it was always wrong and a gross exaggeration to call someone a loony or an idiot. Galileo was probably called mad when he suggested that the earth revolved around the sun, rather than the other way round. Often so-called “mad” people have been highly gifted in the arts or science.

Another misuse of language is the term, “nanny state”. A nanny tucks you up in bed and makes you a bedtime drink. No one seriously suggests that the government contemplates doing that. If, however, we take “nanny” to mean “caring”, then that is exactly what the state should be. God is sometimes called a nanny – caring for his people. Jesus used nanny-like language when he said that he would have offered to Jerusalem the same protection that a hen offers to her chicks. People sometimes need protecting from themselves, such as from climbing unsafe ladders or from absorbing unsafe chemicals, and therefore need a nanny state to think for them.

Jesus said, “Let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no. He himself was the Word of God, declaring the Father's truth. Let our speech be clear, honest and supportive.