

Reading I

Is 62:1-5

For Zion's sake I will not be silent,
for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her vindication shines forth like the dawn
and her victory like a burning torch.

Nations shall behold your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
you shall be called by a new name
pronounced by the mouth of the LORD.
You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the LORD,
a royal diadem held by your God.
No more shall people call you "Forsaken,"
or your land "Desolate,"
but you shall be called "My Delight,"
and your land "Espoused."
For the LORD delights in you
and makes your land his spouse.
As a young man marries a virgin,
your Builder shall marry you;
and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride
so shall your God rejoice in you.

(c) JERUSALEM, GOD'S DELIGHT (62:1-12). It is difficult to determine who sings this song. The opening line pulses nervously, and the tense mood of excitement continues throughout. Is God breaking the silence of many years (42:14)? It was particularly during the long, frustrating days after the first return that Israel complained of the divine silence (57:11; 64:12; 65:6). Most commentators, however (Muilenburg, Kissane, Penna, Cheyne), consider the entire poem to have been spoken by the Prophet. While others were becoming small minded, jealous, and miserable (Hag and Neh 5), a disciple of Dt-Is breaks into song over the messianic Jerusalem that will dawn the moment that God's people become fully obedient and trustful.

1-5. So long as God was silent, Zion was desolate; but now that God is about to speak, "her vindication" (41:14; 54:14, 17) "shines" with the suddenness of the desert "dawn" (60:1). Never did this hope seem closer to fulfillment than on the Feast of Tabernacles, when lights were kindled "at the place of the water-drawing" so bright that "there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that was not illumined by the light of the place." These words of the Mishnah were commented on by the rabbis: He who has not witnessed the rejoicing at the place of the Water-Drawing has never seen rejoicing in his life. "He who has not seen Jerusalem in her splendour, has never seen a desirable city in his life" (Mishnah, *Sukkah* 51a-b). It was at the same Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus spoke (Jn 7:37-38; 8:12).**3.** Muilenburg (*op. cit.* 718) refers to the ancient practice of a god's wearing a crown patterned after the city walls. Yahweh holds such a crown in his hands. Jerusalem is not so much a crown of glory to Yahweh as Yahweh is Zion's glory and protection.**4.** Names like "Forsaken" (' zûbâ) and "My Delight in her" (ep î-bâ) are known in Israelite history (1 Kgs 22:42; 2 Kgs 21:1).**5.** The Yahweh-as-spouse theme is not just repeated

here (49:14; 50:1), but sinful, adulterous Israel is restored to that joyful age of long ago when she was the virgin spouse of God

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10](#)

(3) Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.

Sing to the LORD a new song;

sing to the LORD, all you lands.

Sing to the LORD; bless his name.

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.

Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.

Give to the LORD, you families of nations,

give to the LORD glory and praise;

give to the LORD the glory due his name!

Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.

Worship the LORD in holy attire.

Tremble before him, all the earth;

Say among the nations: The LORD is king.

He governs the peoples with equity.

Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations.

Ps 96. A hymn of praise, commemorating Yahweh as king (see comment on Pss 47, 93, 95). In 1 Chr 16, this song is inserted in the context of David's bringing the Ark to the Jerusalem Tabernacle. There is a noticeable similarity to Is (40:10; 44:23; 49:13). Structure: 1-6, Israel is invited to sing of God's incomparable majesty and creative power; 7-10, an invitation to the nations to bring tribute and to worship God as king and creator; 11-13, an invitation to creation to rejoice in the Lord's dominion. **1. new song:** So-called because it commemorates a new evidence of God's rule; the divine supremacy is to be acknowledged in liturgical worship. Note the Ugaritic abc-a«b«d pattern (and "staircase" parallelism in 7-8). **2. his salvation:** The saving deeds of old, which are now being rehearsed. **4.** Cf. Ps 95:3. **5. things of naught:** Lit., "zeros" (' lîlîm), a favorite term of Isaiah (2:8; 10:10; etc.); the ineffectiveness of the gods is contrasted with Yahweh's creative power. **6.** The personification of divine attributes in the entourage of the deity is found also in Mesopotamian hymns (cf. Falkenstein and Von Soden, *op. cit.*, 222, 320; Ps 89:15). **his sanctuary:** Probably the Temple. **7-9.** Cf. Ps 29:1-2. **10.** Israel is commanded to say, "The Lord is king"—the characteristic cry of the enthronement Pss; the kingship is shown in creation (from of old) and in rule of the world. Some OL and LXX manuscripts added "from the tree, in a reference to the crucifixion of Christ (cf. "regnavit a ligno Deus" of the *Vexilla regis* hymn). **13. he comes:** The coming of the Lord is the actualization of his reign in the cult, which represents and celebrates his rule in the world.

Reading II

[1 Cor 12:4-11](#)

Brothers and sisters:

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.

To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom;
to another, the expression 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, mighty deeds;

to another, prophecy;

to another, discernment of spirits;

to another, varieties of tongues;

to another, interpretation of tongues.

But one and the same Spirit produces all of these,
distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

(c) ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS (12:1-14:40). Their test, value, and exercise. Genuine spiritual gifts are distinguished by their conformity to Christian faith (12:1-3). Diverse as they are in operation and manifestation, all the gifts come from the one divine source and are directed to the one aim of promoting the well-being of the Church (12:4-30). The relative value of the various gifts is to be estimated by their usefulness to the Church. Better, however, than all such gifts is charity (ch. 13). The relative value of the gifts is illustrated by a comparison of prophecy and the gift of tongues. Practical rules are given for regulating the exercise of the gifts (ch. 14). See L. Cerfaux, *L'église des Corinthiens* 81-95.

74 (i) *The test of the gifts* (12:1-3). **1. spiritual:** This adjective is probably neuter (14:1), “the spiritual gifts.” **2.** A reference to the unbridled religious enthusiasm and emotionalism so highly esteemed by pagans, such as the prophetic trance of the Pythia of Delphi and of the priestesses of Dodona, and the orgiastic frenzies of the devotees of Dionysos (see K. Prümm, *Religionsgeschichtliches Handbuch für den Raum der altchristlichen Umwelt* [Rome, 1954] 230f., 248f.). **3.** Conformity to the faith is the test of a genuine charismatic. No one can confess the divinity and sovereignty of Jesus unless he is enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

75 (ii) *Many gifts but one giver* (12:4-31). **4. gifts:** Paul’s use of the term *charismata* is wider than the technical theological use of it today. It embraced for him all graces given primarily for the benefit of the Church: the gifts of administration and of assistance to the neighbor, as well as the extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit in miracles, tongues, etc. **5.** There are many spiritual gifts, but all come from the one divine source, the Spirit, the Lord, and the Father. The terms “gifts,” “ministries,” and “operations” designate the spiritual gifts according to different aspects

that permit their appropriation to the Spirit, Lord, and Father. As *gratiae gratis datae*, the “gifts” are attributed by appropriation to the Holy Spirit, who is himself *the Gift* sent by the Lord Jesus and the Father. As “ministries” or “services,” the gifts are attributed to the Lord Jesus, who was sent as the Son in the Incarnation to minister and serve. As “activities” or “operations,” the gifts are attributed to God the Father (**ho theos**), the source of all being and activity.

7. the common good: One in source, all the gifts manifesting the Spirit’s presence have one purpose, the “common good.” The Gk word for this concept is **to sympheron**, which denotes what is advantageous; it connotes the “utility” these gifts have for the building up or “edification” of the Church, as the context shows. Paul now lists nine charisms, which may be arranged in three groups: (1) a discourse of wisdom, a discourse of knowledge, and faith (i.e., the confidence in God that moves mountains); (2) the gift of healing, miraculous powers, and prophecy; (3) the discernment of spirits, the gift of tongues, and the gift of interpreting tongues. All of these are directed to the welfare of the Church, just as the members of the human body exist for the good of the whole.

77 12. Christ is one, just as the human body is one, in spite of the diversity and number of its members.**13. baptized into one body:** Baptism incorporates the Christian into the risen, glorified body of Christ, so that the Church, the assembly of the baptized, is the manifestation and extension of the Lord’s body in this world. The Church is the body of Christ because it is composed of members who share in the life of the Risen Lord.

(See Ahern, B., *CBQ* 23 [1961] 199-209. Benoit, P., *RB* 63 [1956] 5-44. Cerfaux, L., *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul* [N.Y., 1959] 350-56. Robinson, J. A. T., *The Body* [SBT 5; London, 1957].)**27-30.** The application of the analogy of the human body, just set forth in vv. 14-26. All the gifts, like the members of the human body, were given for the good of the whole Church. The “higher” gifts are those that contribute more to the Church’s welfare. Better than all the gifts is charity.

⁷⁸ (iii) *A description and praise of charity* (13:1-13). This is one of the most sublime passages of the entire Bible. The loftiness of Paul’s thoughts and the enthusiasm of his expression elevate his prose to an almost poetic sublimity. *love:* This is supernatural love, what theology terms the virtue of charity. It is distinguished sharply in v. 3 from philanthropy and humanitarianism. (For the term **agapē** see C. Spicq, *Agape in the NT* [3 vols.; St. Louis, 1963-67].) **1. tongues of men and of angels:** All possible tongues; the allusion is to the gift of tongues. The rabbis speculated

Gk Greek

CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

RB *Revue biblique*

SBT *Studies in Biblical Theology* (London and Naperville, Ill.)

NT *New Testament*

on the language of the angels (see Str-B 3, 449 for some of the rabbinical ideas; H. Riesenfeld, *ConNeot* 5 [1941] 17-18). **5.** *does not brood over injuries*: That is, is not resentful. Some commentators, however, would translate the phrase as in Zech 8:17 (LXX) where it means “does not plot evil” (see the MT). **6.** *is not happy when others are treated unjustly, but rejoices in the truth*: **Al theia** is a synonym here for justice, moral rectitude. **7.** *covers*: That is, “excuses” or “passes over in silence” (stegei). **8-11.** Charity is eternal, but the gifts (**charismata**) are transitory and temporal. There will be no need or use for them in heaven, just as a man has no use for the toys of his childhood¹. **12.** *then face to face*: This expression of the eschatological hope in terms of a knowledge of God is unique in Paul’s writings, although it is a common Jewish theme (4 *Ezra* 7:98; Ap 22:3-4; Mt 5:8). In comparing the knowledge we have of God in this world (now) with that hoped for in the world to come (then), Paul employs two metaphors; one borrowed from the OT, “in an enigma” (Nm 12:6), the other from the popular Cynic-Stoic philosophy, “in a mirror.” The first contrasts the privileged revelations given to Moses with those given to the prophets. Not even Moses could see God “face to face” in this world (Ex 32:20). The second refers to the indirect vision of an object seen in a mirror; one sees not the object itself, but its reflection. Since the passage occurs in a context devoted to a consideration of the spiritual gifts, the Apostle is comparing with the “face to face” vision of God the knowledge possessed through the charismatic gifts of gnosis and Prophecy. *I have been known*: This phrase refers to the prevenient and merciful love of God shown in Paul’s election to the faith and apostolate. *then I shall know*: This corresponding phrase implies a relationship between the perfect vision or knowledge of God and the charity by which we love God even in this life. So, of the three virtues that are abiding in this present life (*now*) and that are therefore greater than the transitory spiritual gifts, the greatest is charity (see J. Dupont, *Gnosis*, 105-48; G. Kittel, “*Ainigma*,” *ThDNT* 1, 178-80).

The literature on 1 Cor 13 has been well summarized by J. T. Sanders, *Interpr* 20 (1966) 159-87. Many commentators feel that the term “hymn” is not applicable to this chapter, for it is quite

Str-B H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* (6 vols.; Munich, 1922-61)

ConNeot *Coniectanea Neotestamentica*

LXX Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT)

MT Masoretic Text (of the Hebrew Bible)

¹Brown, R. E., Fitzmyer, J. A., & Murphy, R. E. 1968]; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996. *The Jerome Biblical commentary* (electronic ed.). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ

OT Old Testament

ThDNT G. Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1964-). English version of *ThWNT*

Interpr *Interpretation*

unlike the recognized NT hymns in christological content and parallel format. To many scholars it seems to be an afterthought added to the original sequence of the letter, since the first part of 12:31 matches the second part of 14:1 very well. Paul's original thought would then have been that the Corinthians were not to seek after a lowly gift, like speaking in tongues, but rather a higher gift, viz. prophecy. However, on later reflection he thought of the gift that they should really seek after, which would make even prophecy insignificant by comparison, viz. love. It would also negate the tendency of the charismatics to be proud and self-seeking. So Paul added what is now ch. 13, inserting it along with 12:31b and 14:1a. The eschatological aspect of **agap** has been emphasized by K. Barth, especially in the light of the context of ch. 15. The classic treatment of love in Paul and the NT is that of A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros* (London, 1953). He stresses that unlike the highest form of human love, whereby man seeks self-perfection in what is noble and spiritual, **agap** comes from God to us in Jesus Christ. It is unmotivated and creative, seeks nothing and is unattracted by goodness. God loved us as sinners in Jesus. We must open ourselves to that love and allow God's love to be active in us in the unmotivated love of others. (See also V. Warnach, *Agape* [Düsseldorf, 1951].)

Gospel

[Jn 2:1-11](#)

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee,
and the mother of Jesus was there.

Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.

When the wine ran short,
the mother of Jesus said to him,
“They have no wine.”

And Jesus said to her,
“Woman, how does your concern affect me?
My hour has not yet come.”

His mother said to the servers,
“Do whatever he tells you.”

Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings,
each holding twenty to thirty gallons.

Jesus told them,
“Fill the jars with water.”

So they filled them to the brim.

Then he told them,
“Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.”

So they took it.

And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine,
without knowing where it came from

— although the servers who had drawn the water knew —,
the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him,

“Everyone serves good wine first,
and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one;

but you have kept the good wine until now.”

Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

(c) THE WITNESS OF THE DISCIPLES: THE FIRST SIGN (2:1-11). Thus far the disciples have repeated the witness of the Baptist, which declared that Jesus was the Messiah. In the following episode we find the fulfillment of the prophecy made to Nathanael in 1:51, of something greater than the messiahship to which they will be witness. The story John has chosen to serve as his first “sign” (see comment on v. 11) is not found in the Syn tradition, though it may be called to mind in the parabolic teaching of Mk 2:22 par. It is fairly easy to explain why such an account would not have found its way into the Syn outline even if the witness responsible for the Syn tradition (Peter) had been present, since it would have readily been passed over in favor of material better assimilable into the kerygma; on the other hand, it is precisely such an event that lends itself to the Johannine “irony” (→ 62 below).

59 1. *on the third day*: In following the chronology (1:29, 35, 41, 43), we must take this to mean the third day (that is, the day after the morrow) following the call of Philip and Nathanael. Thus the wedding feast at Cana takes place on the “seventh day” of the new creation story. John has not mentioned a sixth day, which would have been spent in travel from Bethany to Cana; however, see comment on 1:45. In any case, a symbolic rather than an historical chronology is in question. Undoubtedly, John has deliberately arranged the chronology to build up to a “third day,” evoking the memory of the Lord’s resurrection (glorification) on the third day after his death—here, the glory of the Lord (v. 11) is manifested on the third day after its promise. *Cana in Galilee*: Mentioned in the NT only by Jn, but otherwise by Josephus and other ancient writers. It is called “of Galilee” to distinguish it from another place of the same name in Phoenicia (Jos 19:28, q nâ). The village (Kefr Kenna) pointed out to the visitor to Palestine today as Cana has a rival contender (Khirbet Qana) a few miles away, now completely in ruins. Archaeologically, the latter site probably has more to recommend it as the place named in Jn (cf. F.-M. Abel, *GP* 2, 291f.; 412f.; C. Kopp, *The Holy Places of the Gospels* [N.Y., 1963] 143-54). *Jesus’ mother*: Mary is mentioned elsewhere in Jn in 2:12; 6:42; 19:25-28, but never by name. Both in this account and in that of 19:25-28, where she is brought into intimate relation with her Son, at the beginning and the end of his public life, a certain symbolic pattern emerges in John’s treatment of her (→ 63 below). 2. *his disciple*: In Jn only five disciples have been mentioned so far, but in 6:67 the disciples of Jesus are called “the Twelve”; it is not clear whether all the Twelve are present on this occasion. 3. Mary’s observation to the Lord is not precisely the request of a miracle (so H. Strathmann), though evidently she is counting on the resourcefulness of her Son.

Syn Synoptic Gospels *or* Synoptic writers

par. Parallel passage(s) in the Synoptic Gospels

NT New Testament

In this gesture as well as in her command to the servants in v. 5, she appears to have occupied some position of authority at the feast; possibly the wedding was that of a near relative.

60 4. *woman*: This form of address is not disrespectful; it was commonly employed in speaking to women (cf. 4:21). In its use it resembles our somewhat more formal “madam.” On the other hand, it was completely unheard of for a son to address his mother in such a fashion (cf. J. Michl, *Bib* 36 [1955] 492-509). Since the term “mother” is deliberately avoided here, the substitution of “mother” for “woman” in KL and NEB succeeds in missing the point of the inspired author (for further comment, → 63 below). *what to me and to you*: This literal translation is variously rendered in modern versions. The idiom is from the OT (Jgs 11:12; 2 Sm 16:10; 1 Kgs 17:18; 2 Kgs 3:13; 2 Chr 35:21), where it signifies, as it does in the NT (Mk 5:7), a disavowal of some kind. It is evidently not an outright refusal of Mary’s implied request, in view of what follows. Boismard, Michl, and others take it as a denial of Mary’s need to ask, since they translate the following statement as a question: “Has not my hour already come?” (cf. S. Grill, “This interpretation was already entertained by some of the Gk Fathers (see Lagrange on this passage). However, there is no obvious reason to introduce a difference in meaning in a word as theologically significant in Jn as Jesus’ “hour” (for a contrary view, cf. C. P. Ceroke, *TS* 17 [1956] 1-38). The disavowal seems rather to involve the role in which Mary has been cast, indicated already in the unusual title “woman.” Just as in Lk 2:49 Jesus reminds his mother of his relation to the Father, which transcends all human relationships (so also Mk 3:31-35 par.), so here he reminds her of the only title under which she may command his intervention; further, the time when she may thus command has not yet arrived. *my hour has not yet come*: The “hour” of Jesus is that of his glorification, the crucifixion, death, and resurrection by which salvation is achieved (cf. 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27, 13:1; 17:1). Just as it is in this glorification that Jesus achieves his destiny, so it is in virtue of it alone that Mary’s intercession can have efficacy. Nevertheless, that hour can be, and is, foreshadowed in the “signs” of Jesus (cf. A. Feuillet, *ETL* 36 [1960] 5-22).

Bib *Biblica*

KL J. A. Kleist and J. L. Lilly, *The New Testament: Rendered from the Original Greek with Explanatory Notes* (Milwaukee, 1954)

NEB New English Bible (Oxford and Cambridge version)

OT Old Testament

NT New Testament

Gk Greek

TS *Theological Studies*

par. Parallel pasage(s) in the Synoptic Gospels

ETL *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses*

5. Mary's action indicates that she did not take Jesus' words as an outright refusal. She addresses the servants in the words of Gn 41:55 (see 19:23f.). 6. *six stone water jars*: Stone was used because in Jewish belief it could not contract ritual uncleanness (cf. Str-B 2, 406f.). It is doubtful that John sees any special significance in the number six (the number of imperfection, cf. Ap 13:18). *Jewish purification*: Jewish custom demanded ceremonial washings before and after eating. John alludes to this ritual in order to explain the presence of such a large quantity of water. Also, this circumstance also allows him to point up a pattern that will accompany Jesus' "signs": A type associated with Judaism is systematically replaced by an antitype that originates in Christ. 7. *to the brim*: The reality of what Jesus is about to do is stressed: The jars contained nothing but water. Jn mirrors the reticence of the first chapter of Gn in alluding to Christ's creative miracle: His word alone suffices to effect the change. 8. *the headwaiter*: At Gentile banquets one of the guests usually assumed the position of "master of the banquet" as a mark of honor. The familiarity with which the "headwaiter" in this instance addresses the bridegroom (v. 9) may indicate that the Jews followed a similar custom. 9-10. Again the reality of the fact is underscored. Testimony is given to the excellence of the new wine (cf. Lk 5:39) by one who is ignorant of its origin and therefore subject to no suggestion. 11. *the first one of his signs*: The word "sign" repeatedly occurs in the first half of Jn's Gospel (cf. D. Mollat, *SP* 2, 209-18). Pre-eminent among these are Jesus' miracles, of which Jn records only seven. They are called signs not merely because they are worked to encourage belief, though they are this, but because they signify Christ for what he is: They illustrate his true character (cf. 5:36; → Johannine Theology, 80:27-29). As will be seen, Jn has chosen his seven signs to illustrate Jesus' character with an increasing degree of clarity. *he revealed his glory*: See comment on 1:14. The miracle of water made into wine may in itself not appear to be an apt indication of Christ's glory; however, it must be taken as Jn takes it, as the first of a series, all of which are related to the life that is to be found in the Word of God (see comment on 1:4). As a creative miracle, it properly stands at the head of the series. *his disciples believed in him*: The disciples have now been confronted with something greater than what the Baptist had pointed out to them. With this new creative power now made manifest in Jesus, the disciples have passed beyond the stage of the history of salvation represented by the Precursor.

62 Additional Comments on 2:1-11. As has been shown, it is clearly John's intention to write history in the record of this sign. This does not prevent him, however, from exploiting the theological potentialities of the episode; in so doing, he shows that this aspect is more important to him than the mere recording of a miracle. In stressing that the water Jesus replaced with wine was that "demanded by Jewish purificatory customs," he allows us to see the first of many ways in which Christ has replaced the institutions of Judaism. The pattern thus established will be repeated in other episodes. That this pattern should have begun at a wedding feast is in itself significant, in view of the OT figure of Israel as the spouse of Yahweh (Hos 2:21f.; Jer 2:2; Is 54:5f.; etc.). This figure developed in Judaism, and even saw in a wedding feast the symbol for

Str-B H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* (6 vols.; Munich, 1922-61)

SP J. Coppens *et al.*, eds., *Sacra pagina* (2 vols.; Gembloux, 1959)

the Messianic age (cf. Mt 9:15; Str-B 1, 517f.). In this context, it becomes fairly obvious that John would have expected his Christian readers to make a further association in reflecting on the significance of this event in the life of Jesus. The sacramental interest that John displays elsewhere (3:5; 6:51; 1 Jn 5:6; etc.) leaves little doubt that he wants us to think of the Eucharist. This is probably also his reason for bringing this episode into close relation with the passover (v. 13), as he does the other major Eucharistic episode of the multiplication of the loaves (cf. 6:5), to recall that the Eucharistic sacrifice is the Christian Passover (cf. 12:1; 1 Cor 5:7). Viewed in this way, the “sign” of Cana appears as something far greater than simply one miracle out of many in the ministry of Christ. It is, rather, a sign in the fullest possible sense, one of the sacraments (=“signs”) by which the Christian recognizes through faith and in the life of the Church the presence of the same Christ who was visibly present to the first disciples in the flesh (cf. 20:29; 1 Jn 1:1).