

**Being responsive to signs of Jesus' presence Wednesday in 24th Week
September 16th, 2020 (1Cor. 12:31-13:13, Luke 7:31-35)**

In today's gospel, Jesus compares the religious leaders of his time to children who play in the marketplace. They happily pretend to play pipes while other children dance to the music. At other times their games reflect the sorrows of life, perhaps what they had seen at the death of an elderly neighbour. Some of them sang dirges while the other children would mourn and wail in response. But some children refused to join in any of the games; they wouldn't dance when the pipes were played, and they wouldn't mourn when dirges were sung.

In like manner John the Baptist and Jesus came with their own unique styles. John came with an ascetic style praying and fasting always, but Jesus came with an open style eating and mingling with people especially with sinners. Yet neither the ascetic style of John nor the open style of Jesus pleased the religious leaders. So, Jesus compares them to the scenario of children's game in the marketplace. They would neither mourn in response to the grim message of John the Baptist nor dance in response to Jesus' more joyful message. They dismissed John as possessed and Jesus as a glutton and a drunkard.

We too may also be indifferent to the invitations of John's message to repentance or that of Jesus's joyful music of grace and favour from God. In the 1st reading, Paul sings a hymn of love as a supreme virtue. He says love does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Today we celebrate the memorial of Saints Cornelius and Cyprian who opposed the Novatian heresy out of love. Like them, may we be responsive to Jesus' invitation to dance to his rhythm of love and openness. **Amen.**

By Fr Emmanuel Subaar