

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis**  
**Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jan. 19-20, 2019, Cycle C**

It is noteworthy as we enter back into Ordinary Time in this "Cycle C" that for this Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, we depart from the Gospel of Luke and read the Wedding Feast at Cana story from John's Gospel. The tale of the Wedding Feast at Cana is really another Epiphany or Manifestation Story about Jesus. In fact, here are three Epiphany stories that manifest or show forth Jesus as the chosen one! One, is the visit of the Magi to the child Jesus, which we Catholics celebrate on what we call our Feast of Epiphany. Second, is the Baptism of Jesus, which we Catholics celebrated last Sunday to close out the Christmas season. And the third is the Wedding Feast at Cana. All three stories manifest Jesus as being the Chosen One of the Father, the Light of all Nations, and the one who inaugurates the wedding celebration of the union between God and humanity!

At the wedding feast in Cana, the Gospel of John tells us Jesus changes water into wine – and quite a bit of wine at that – six ceremonial stone water jars, each holding 20-30 gallons. Noticing that they ran out of wine, Mary tells Jesus: "They have no wine." Though, initially protesting, Jesus does remedy the situation. It is critical to note that John refers to Jesus' powerful deeds not as "miracles;" instead John refers to Jesus' "deeds out of the ordinary" as "signs." The Gospel writer says: "Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs at Cana in Galilee, and so revealed his glory..." In the Gospel of John, Jesus works seven great signs; all seven signs for John are Epiphanies that in Jesus, the sacred, the holy, the divine has become one with humanity and the world is now being redeemed – for those with the eyes of faith to see!

You may ask the question, why seven signs in the Gospel of John?! Well, for the Jews the number seven means fullness, completeness, totality. In a certain sense, what the author of John is trying to say is that the Divine infuses all of creation, and, if we but open our eyes of faith, we will see that God performs great signs everywhere that point to His presence working in the world. One great sign (for Catholics) is life itself!

We believe that life, especially human life, is a manifestation of the Holy working in creation. We are coming upon this Tuesday, the anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 decision that declared abortion for all practical purposes to be a constitutional right. We Catholics, of course, find it difficult to understand why everyone cannot see the conception of a child as something deeper – the presence of the sacred, the holy, the divine. The conception of human life is a powerful deed, but powerful signs do not guarantee faith on the part of those who witness the sign. Not all believed who witnessed Jesus heal the sick and the deformed.

To understand a sign, such as the conception of human life, one must be able to see beyond the sign to its deeper meaning, which requires the eyes of Faith. Why do we seem to accomplish so little in gaining legal protection for the unborn? Unfortunately, because many do not see in human conception, something sacred, something holy, something divine. Do we throw up our arms and just give up? No! We have a lot of work to do, and a lot of praying to do – for the battle we have is not so much a legal battle, but a battle of winning over hearts, where more and more and finally all come to see with the eyes of faith the great sign human life is of the divine presence in our world. And, only God can change human hearts! So prayer is our main work!