

Homily Outline for the 2nd Sunday of the Year - Cycle C
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
January 16, 2022

† Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

- I. We all know people who were planning to get married in the Spring of 2020 when the COVID restrictions were imposed.
 - A. Some postponed their weddings until they could have many guests.
 - B. Some got married in a simple ceremony and delayed their reception until larger gatherings were permitted.
 - C. Those of you who are married know that your wedding day was one of the most important days of your life.
 - D. Mary and Jesus were aware of the importance of the day for the bride and groom at Cana and responded accordingly.

- II. Today is the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time.
 - A. “Ordinary” in this sense does not mean dull or boring.
 - B. “Ordinary” refers to the ordered numbering of Sundays in this liturgical season.
 - C. “Ordinary” reminds us of the “order” that God brought to the chaos through His creation (cf. Book of Genesis).
 - D. The miracle performed by Jesus at Cana was truly extraordinary!

- III. Lessons we learn from the miracle at Cana:
 - A. We turn to Mary in prayer.
 - 1. Catholics do not adore Mary, for she points us to her Son.
 - 2. We pray for Mary’s intercession, because Jesus grants her requests.
 - 3. Jesus may ask, “Why?” or “Why now?” but he does not say no to His mother.

B. Our asking for God's help is a 2-way street.

1. Mary tells the wine stewards: "Do whatever He tells you."
2. We do not just give Jesus a wish list for her to give to Jesus and then we sit back and wait for Him to grant our requests.
3. Mary tells us as well, "Do whatever He tells you," and Jesus tells us to follow His commandments to love God with all our mind, heart and soul; to love our neighbors as ourselves; even to love our enemies; and to follow the Ten Commandments.

IV. Our readings today are very Trinitarian.

A. In the first reading from the Book of Isaiah (Is 62:1-5), God the Father changes the name of the people of Israel.

1. They are no longer to be known as "Forsaken" or "Desolate," but shall be called "My Delight" and "Espoused."
2. God's relationship with His people is a spousal relationship.
3. A new name is given when there is a change for the better.
 - a. The Rite of Baptism begins with the question posed to the parents and godparents: "What name do you give this child?"
 - b. The baptismal name is how a person is known for the rest of his or her life.
 - c. It is customary to take the name of a saint at Confirmation: a holy person to emulate.
 - d. Religious sisters and religious brother customarily take a new name when professing their vows of consecration.
 - e. The Pope takes a new name when he is elected.

B. In the second reading (1 Cor 12:4-11), St. Paul describes how the Holy Spirit gives diverse gifts to different people.

1. We are called to discern our vocation and use our unique gifts and talents for the sake of the whole community.

2. These different gifts work together in harmony like a symphony orchestra.
- C. In the Gospel (Jn 2:1-11), the changing of the water into wine foreshadows Jesus' changing wine into His blood.
1. The wine created by Jesus is given in abundance: 6 jars holding 20-30 gallons each, for a total of 120-180 gallons of wine!
 2. Jesus pours out His Precious Blood for us in abundance to forgive our sins.
 3. St. John refers to these miracles in his Gospel as "signs."
 4. Signs point us in a direction to reach a destination.
 - a. If we want to go to Chicago, the signs point north.
 - b. If we want to go to St. Louis, the signs point south.
 - c. If we want to go to Indianapolis, the signs point us east.
 - d. If we want to go to heaven, we follow the signs of Jesus.
- D. Signs are not proof, but still require faith.
1. A skeptic at Cana might have alleged that Jesus contrived the miracle by having the extra wine hidden somewhere in reserve.
 2. A person of faith believes that Jesus really did change the water into wine.
 3. A person of faith believes that Jesus really changes the bread and wine at this Mass into His Body and Blood.
 4. In this Eucharist, we give thanks to God for this great gift!
- V. May God give us this grace. Amen.