

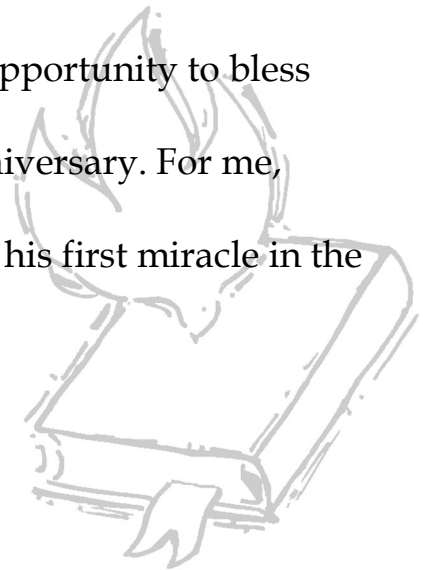
**Homily**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday OT C**  
Rev. Peter G. Jankowski  
January 15-16, 2022

Is 62: 1-5  
Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10  
1 Cor 12: 4-11  
Jn 2: 1-11

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As we begin this season of ordinary time, and the story of the wedding feast at Cana, recall how in December 2017, I visited the city of Cana with a group of pilgrims that were on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. My hope and prayer is that the Hispanic community I currently serve will be able to visit the Holy Land this year, from February 9-18 (although I fear what would happen if I get put on a seven-day quarantine in Israel if I get there!!! We were not about to go in December with a group offering a “Service Pilgrimage” to Israel. Hopefully, our Hispanic Community will have better luck in travelling next month than we had last month.

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gospel of John was a profound moment. I could not believe that I was standing in the chapel where Jesus first turned water into wine! I reminded the couples that where they were standing, Jesus offered a miracle of blessing for the couple married then as he did for the couples married today.

As Jesus did two thousand years ago, our married pilgrims (along with the rest of us) shared wine that was purchased from the vineyards surrounding this city of Cana. At the time, I bought bottles of wine for people back in the states, including my father and his wife, who had just celebrated their twenty-fifth year of marriage. The pilgrims in the holy land were kind have to gift me with a chasuble they purchased in the city (which I could not find to wear at the time of this recording) but I kept the chasuble as a reminder of that intense moment of faith – when you walk the steps and follow the life that Jesus lived two thousand years ago, you very much realize how profound your faith life becomes in the process.

As we learn today from the gospel of John, this miracle at Cana was

the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and the first of seven miracles that Jesus offered in this gospel to show people of the time about the power of God, that the son of God was incarnate and was offering miracles in the presence of those to whom he ministered. In the gospel of John, Jesus teaches us that when he was the bread of life and the cup of salvation, that if we eat his bread and drink his blood will remain in him as he is in us (Jn 6: 56).

In the gospel of John, Jesus teaches us metaphors that reference him as "the bread of life," "the lamb of God," the light of the world" and "the good shepherd." Mainly that he was the bread of life. He is the cup of life. He is the bread of life. In the gospel of John, the author continues to explain to us who Jesus is - we call this explanation a type of "Christology" that explains what role Jesus plays in the life of the world. Towards this cause, both the author of John and Jesus himself use analogies and stories that we can understand.

In reference to the institution of marriage and today's gospel, I can sit here and read the Catechism for all of you, telling you about the

charisms of marriage, that a faithful marriage is seen as indissoluble, unitive and procreative (indissoluble, unitive y procreative). I can tell you that, according to God's law and according to nature, when man and woman unite in marriage, they make a commitment to do so for the rest of their lives in good times and in bad. I can tell you that three Christian symbols result in the union of husband and wife, especially in the most intimate moments experienced by a couple. At those times, the husband and wife are unitive – they are one. They are indissoluble – the make a commitment never to be separated. They are procreative – they commit themselves to bringing children in the world. I can tell you that paragraphs 2380-2400 cite the abuses that take place in Christian marriage, in all its varying forms. I can tell you that the words of consent and the rings placed on the fingers of the husband and wife serve as visible signs of the invisible grace that comes forth from this sacramental institution.

I can tell you that many today objects to both God's laws of marriage and the Natural Law that God established and that the shift public

opinion polls attempt to undo the parameters that God has set for us. We also have learned in our history what happens when we veer from God's plan and how difficult it becomes to right the Church when its tenets have been compromised.

I can teach you about the symbolism of marriage and the way this symbolism has been both embraced and abused. I can also just open a bottle of wine and show you the image of a good marriage with the telling of this story of my Italian family.

Why would this gospel tell of this miracle that we will not find in any other of the gospel readings? Moreover, if the gospel of John only describes *seven* miracles in total that our Lord conducts<sup>1</sup>, why would this miracle of not such significant importance be included in the list of seven? The answer, as offered to us by some scripture scholars, might have a great deal to do with the image of Christian marriage itself and the way our Lord will choose to define it.

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<sup>1</sup> The seven miracles are listed as the changing of water into wine (2: 1-11), the Healing of the Official's Son (4: 43-54), the Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (5: 1-9), the Feeding of the 5,000 (6: 1-5), the Walking on the Water (6: 16-25), the Healing of the Man born Blind (9: 1-41) and the Raising Lazarus from the Dead (11: 1-44).

Scholars will tell us that this institution of marriage, established by God and by Natural Law, was seen in the Old Testament as the union that would continue to provide a covenantal relationship between the divine and a Chosen People. As seen in the Old Testament, the relationship allowed God to show his favor upon successive generations and establish a relationship between heaven and earth.

In today's gospel reading, our Lord elevates the status of marriage to that not just of man and woman but of God and God's creation, namely humanity. This gift of water turned wine becomes a precursor to the marriage symbolism presented at the end of the gospel when blood and water flow from the side of our Lord at his crucifixion, the symbol of Christian marriage that exists between God and us. From *that* symbol on the cross of that blood and water, we are taught that Christ married the Church at that moment and the symbolism of the Church is established through that outpouring. (see Catechism #1225). As paragraph #1621 of the Catechism shares with us...

In the Latin Rite the celebration of marriage between two Catholic faithful normally takes place during Holy Mass, because of the connection of all the sacraments with the Paschal mystery of Christ. In the Eucharist, the memorial of the New Covenant is realized, the New Covenant in which Christ has united himself for ever to the Church, his beloved bride for whom he gave himself up. It is therefore fitting that the spouses should seal their consent to give themselves to each other through the offering of their own lives by uniting it to the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and by receiving the Eucharist so that, communicating in the same Body and the same Blood of Christ, they may form but “one body” in Christ.

En el rito latino, la celebración del matrimonio entre dos fieles católicos tiene lugar ordinariamente dentro de la Santa Misa, en virtud del vínculo que tienen todos los sacramentos con el Misterio Pascual de Cristo. En la Eucaristía se realiza el memorial de la Nueva Alianza, en la que Cristo se unió para siempre a la Iglesia, su esposa amada por la que se entregó. Es, pues, conveniente que los esposos sellen su consentimiento en darse el uno al otro mediante la ofrenda de sus propias vidas, uniéndose a la ofrenda de Cristo por su Iglesia, hecha presente en el Sacrificio Eucarístico, y recibiendo la Eucaristía, para que, comulgando en el mismo Cuerpo y en la misma Sangre de Cristo, “formen un solo cuerpo” en Cristo.

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Trinity and the image of a Father's relationship with his Son, united by the Holy Spirit. I can show you how a loving couple holding hands illustrated better anything I can do standing here preaching about Christian marriage.

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I can tell you that every time a couple is married in this church, we remind ourselves of the covenant made by man and woman at this sacrament and serves as a reminder of greater, final and eternal covenant that starts at this altar and continually is fulfilled upon this cross, which is placed in close proximity to the altar so that we truly understand what this type of eternal sacrifice means to a faithful Catholic. I can tell you that at a funeral this weekend, a couple was so moved by the kindness of the border town parishes that the man and woman asked what could be done so that God could bless their union in the Church.

This is an opportunity for us to pray for moms and dads, to pray for couples who struggle, to pray for couples who model this faith. I keep arguing then the martyrology of the Church, there are so few couples that are recognized as Catholic saints, who are recognized by virtue of their marriage. Let us realize there are so many couples that live this life, so many couples who have shared their lives with me and live a type of sainthood that is not recognized in the Church or certainly in society.

Please prayer for the couples in our parishes. Please pray for all those who are married. Please pray that Christianity may fill their hearts so that they may in word it and work. Do the love of God in everything that whatever they do, in word or in deed, that they live that married life the sake of modeling the life of the Church in everything they do, for the people that they meet. This is our prayer.

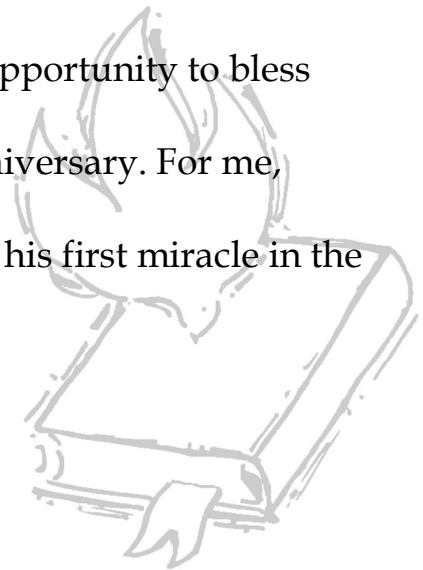
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