

Look for Signs Third Week of Easter Monday, April 16, 2018 8:15 AM Acts 6:8-15; **Jn 6:22-29** (Now to see a sign means to recognize that it is indicating something beyond itself.)

“This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent.”

Now people usually think that if only people could see God at work, they would believe in him. For example if you talk to an atheistic scientist, they say, well, they don't really believe in God because they don't see God at work in nature; nature works without God. Now the ordinary believer would say, yes, but **God created everything, including nature and its laws.** Recently a famous physicist passed away. Asked about God, he said, “Well if by God you meant the author of the laws of nature, I would believe, but that's not what people mean.” Well, that's what some people mean. The question is: **What is really true, not what do people say?** There's the difference. And a lot of people who represent themselves as Christians say things that aren't quite right; that is for sure. But then that's where they are. That's the level they are living in, and so you can't really criticize them. **You can criticize what they say, but not them.**

Now today we have a story about people following Jesus. You would think he would be thrilled, and evidently he is not. Why? Because he says they are following him for the wrong reason. He says, “It is not because you saw the sign.” **Now to see a sign means to recognize that it is indicating something beyond itself,** otherwise it's not a sign. So when we come to the Eucharist, we have to recognize this is not just bread and wine, even though it tastes like bread and wine, but it is something else: **the body, the blood, the soul, and the divinity of the risen Christ.** **When we take the Eucharist with that understanding, we are perceiving a sign.** But Jesus says, “You didn't perceive the sign.” He is referring of course about the feeding of the five thousand with the twelve extra baskets full of leftovers. Even the leftovers are a sign of the gathering of the twelve tribes of Israel, which is a sign of the eschatological messianic banquet.

But they didn't see the sign. They just realized that they were full. He says, "Because you ate the loaves and were filled." Well that's something else.

Now it can happen that people are healed, but is that healing a sign of the love of God, the work of salvation, or is the healing taken for itself? Well, I'm healed; good, now I can get back to life as it was. That's not seeing a sign.

So we have to really go looking for signs. And **if we look for signs, we see them everywhere.** Everything indicates something more than itself. That's why the ancient Fathers of the Church said, "**The whole of creation is a sacrament of God the Creator.**" Everything looks beyond itself. **Nothing in itself is that important; it's only how it connects to everything else.** So it is also with people, with society, with life. And yet the world is full of people like the crowd in today's story who simply want to be filled.