

17th week ordinary time



Today's readings encourage us to view signs not as neutral objects, but as personal demonstrations of God's love for us. They hold that these signs should cause a sense of awe, gratitude and praise.

In the 1st reading, Elisha, the successor to Elijah, was the leader of a prophetic guild. Today's story tells of Elisha's devotion to his band, but points to a higher reality – the fidelity of God to God's word. The leftovers demonstrate Elisha's concern and God's fidelity. Leftovers are a narrative sign of abundance.

In the second reading, the unity of the new humanity, created in Christ, is exemplified by the Church's unity. The Church is the sign of one belief. God involves himself with humanity.

In the Gospel, John treats Christ's deeds on two levels. First, he speaks of Christ's miracles as great events. Second, they are signs that lead to faith. When they direct us to faith, they reveal God's presence in the form of Christ. Jesus is forced to respond to Philip's observation about money and mouthfuls. The people see Jesus' work as only a miracle, they want to make him king. They see him as a new Moses and founder of a new Israel. They can't see the multiplication as a sign: a sign of Jesus as revealer of God's presence. John says that signs clearly reflect God's involvement.