



July 28, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

2 Kings 4:42-44 | Eph 4:1-6 | Jn 6:1-15

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

If the multiplication of the loaves sounds so familiar ... it's because it is! It's the only miracle story found in all four Gospels, and for good reason. Jesus multiplies the meager offering of a boy with five barley loaves and two fish and feeds a large crowd with baskets left over. The story is symbolic of the food that is readily available through Jesus in the Eucharist. The crowd in the Gospel that had been following Jesus was tired, worn out, and hungry. Don't we all feel discouraged now and then? When we do, Jesus makes himself available to us in the Eucharist; he provides daily food that nourishes and sustains. When we eat this life-giving bread, we are strengthened and fortified, as was the crowd in the Gospel, as we heard: "They had more than they could eat."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Trusting in the bounty of God can be a challenging thing. Think about Philip in today's Gospel - looking out over the massive crowd gathered, he thought, "there's no way we'll be able to feed all of these people." And he was right! He couldn't, and we cannot. But the Lord can. And if we are to "live in a manner worthy of the call [we] have received," we must strive to live like the Apostles with complete trust in Jesus, and not rely on our own notions of what's possible and what's not. The miracle here was not that everybody was hiding fish and bread and they shared it. No, the Gospel is clear that Jesus takes what little we can offer and multiplies it beyond our wildest imagination. That's the beauty of Gospel readings like this. Ordinary people are following Jesus, maybe curious about his message, maybe they know someone healed by him and want to see if he's for real. He teaches, they listen, and then something amazing happens. Let us always remember that no effort is too small for God - no kindness too ordinary. He magnifies the good we do. All we need to do is trust in his bounty, and freely give to him what we have.

SERVE Let's make an effort this week to try and emulate the boy in today's Gospel. Give what we have over to Jesus and say, "I trust you to make something out of this." Small acts of kindness, showing gratitude, or sharing our blessings can lead to bigger things than we think possible. We will never know the echoes of the good that we do, as it ripples out and touches other lives, but we can trust that in his love for us, God will use our good deeds for tremendous ends.