

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

In the gospel we see how Christ fed the hungry. He did so with great generosity, Today, at Mass he feeds us with the food of the Eucharist. We receive this precious food, not because we are worthy of it, but because we need it and he invites us to receive it. Let us be inspired by God's power and mercy to value God's gifts and share our blessings for the sake of the common good.

2 Kings 4:42-44

Instead of using an offering of food for himself, as he would be entitled to do, Elisha tells his servant to give the food to the people.

Ephesians 4:1-6

The Spirit of God brings unity and peace and calls on us to be generous and gentle with one another.

John 6:1-15

The story of Jesus feeding thousands of hungry people who had come to listen to him.

The Sunday Obligation *will not be resuming until Advent. This means that until then Catholics are not required to attend Mass on Sunday if they do not feel safe or comfortable doing so.*



Today we begin 5 weeks on 'The Mystery of Faith.'

The 3-year cycle of Sunday readings goes: Matthew, Mark, Luke. John is used especially during Lent and Easter every year.

Mark (this year) is not only first of the Gospels, it is also the shortest. So, every time it is Mark's year, we've got, during the summer, readings from the 6th chapter of John: the great chapter on the Eucharist.

Let us pray that during these 5 weeks we may get a deeper and truer understanding of the great mystery of our faith.

Last week, we heard, in Mark, how the people were waiting for Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee when he crossed by boat; we were told he had compassion on them.

Reflection

"This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world"

The miracle of the multiplication of bread is given in all four Gospels, (Matthew, Mark and Luke as well as John). This shows how important it was for the early Church's understanding of the Eucharist.



In today's Gospel, John's, emphasises that the miracle took place 'near the time of Passover', the Jewish unleavened bread feast.

When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness and dying of hunger, God fed them with manna. Jesus declared that he himself was the bread that had come "down from heaven" to give "life to the world".

Jesus took the loaves of barley bread, the humble food of the poor; he gave thanks (Greek, *eucharisteō*), broke the bread, and distributed it to the hungry people. The people's reaction: "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world," refers to a "prophet like Moses" who was anticipated in 'the final days'. However, the people looked for a Messiah who would be king and a conqueror who would

drive the Romans out of their land. When Jesus realised this, he **withdrew to the mountain alone.**

"Jesus gave the loaves out to all who were sitting ready."

Feeding the Five Thousand



The prophet Elisha was famous for working wonders. In today's first reading he repeats a miracle Moses worked: providing bread or 'manna' for his followers. For us Catholics what's extra- interesting is that, the miraculous feeding by Jesus, in the Gospel, is deliberately described in a way that recalls this miracle of Elisha in in this Old Testament book – the little boy who provides the barley loaves, the repeated command, the feeding and the food left over.

The same steps are seen in the gospel. So Jesus is repeating the Moses miracle after the pattern of Elisha. The only big difference is that the Gospel is a thousand times more generous: instead of twenty 'loaves' (small pitta-breads) among a hundred men, Jesus shares out five small loaves among five thousand.

What's the point of this modelling of the story? For John, Jesus is a second Moses, standing in the same tradition but greater than Moses, making God known just as Moses had done, bringing to completion everything that Moses had begun. 'The Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ.'



The focus today is on the great sacrament of the Eucharist. Today we recall Moses giving the people manna in the desert: Jesus goes up the mountain, as Moses went up the mountain of Sinai, and the Passover, the festival of the beginning of the great trek through the desert, was near.

We will hear that the manna given by Moses was not the true bread from heaven. There was a greater gift to come.

This is chalked up as one of the seven signs worked by Jesus, and they immediately recognise him as a prophet. As a first step he is acting just like the prophet Elisha, who fed his one hundred followers with ten loaves, but now the gift of Jesus is on a far larger scale: five loaves among five thousand men. If we look further back, Jesus is also acting like the prophet Moses, who gave the whole people manna, and ‘they all had enough’. A further numerical reference is given by the twelve baskets of scraps, twelve representing the twelve tribes of Israel.

GOSPEL WORDSEARCH

K	I	C	S	B	C	E	A	D	E	SEA
C	R	L	R	U	S	H	B	E	P	TIBERIAS
I	F	E	R	E	A	S	O	N	I	HILLSIDE
S	A	I	V	M	E	I	Y	A	L	FEAST
D	N	A	P	O	T	F	E	R	I	PASSOVER
G	O	E	D	I	S	L	L	I	H	BREAD
L	R	I	V	B	S	S	R	I	P	BOY
S	A	A	E	I	E	A	A	H	A	FIVE
E	E	S	C	T	F	E	B	P	S	BARLEY
S	A	I	R	E	B	I	T	A	S	LOAVES
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