

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 29, 2018

First Reading - 2 Kings 4: 42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah bringing to Elisha, the man of God, twenty barley loaves made from the firstfruits, and fresh grain in the ear. Elisha said, "Give it to the people to eat." But his servant objected, "How can I set this before a hundred people?" Elisha insisted, "Give it to the people to eat." "For thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and there shall be some left over.'" And when they had eaten, there was some left over, as the LORD had said.

Second Reading - Ephesians 4: 1-6

Brothers and sisters:
I, a prisoner for the Lord,
urge you to live in a manner
worthy of the call you have received,
with all humility and gentleness, with patience,
bearing with one another through love,
striving to preserve the unity of the spirit
through the bond of peace:
one body and one Spirit,
as you were also called to the one hope of your call;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
one God and Father of all,
who is over all and through all and in all.

Psalm 145

*The hand of the Lord feeds us;
he answers all our needs.*

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD,
and let your faithful ones bless you.
Let them discourse of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your might.

The eyes of all look hopefully to you,
and you give them their food in due season;
you open your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The LORD is just in all his ways
and holy in all his works.
The LORD is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call upon him in truth.

Gospel - John 6: 1-15

Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee.
A large crowd followed him,
because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick.
Jesus went up on the mountain,
and there he sat down with his disciples.
The Jewish feast of Passover was near.
When Jesus raised his eyes
and saw that a large crowd was coming to him,
he said to Philip,
"Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?"
He said this to test him,
because he himself knew what he was going to do.
Philip answered him,
"Two hundred days' wages worth of food
would not be enough for each of them to have a little."
One of his disciples,
Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him,
"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish;
but what good are these for so many?"
Jesus said, "Have the people recline."
Now there was a great deal of grass in that place.
So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.
Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks,
and distributed them to those who were reclining,
and also as much of the fish as they wanted.
When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples,
"Gather the fragments left over,
so that nothing will be wasted."
So they collected them,
and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments
from the five barley loaves
that had been more than they could eat.
When the people saw the sign he had done, they said,
"This is truly the Prophet,
the one who is to come into the world."
Since Jesus knew that they were going to come
and carry him off to make him king,
he withdrew again to the mountain alone.

Words from our Holy Father

Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fish. And the end of this passage is important: "and all ate and were satisfied." And they took up what was left over, twelve baskets of broken pieces and Jesus asked the disciples to ensure that nothing was wasted: nothing thrown out! And there is this fact of 12 baskets: why 12? What does it mean? Twelve is the number of the tribes of Israel, it represents symbolically the whole people. And this tells us that when the food was shared fairly, with solidarity, no one was deprived of what he needed, every community could meet the needs of its poorest members. Human and environmental ecology go hand in hand.

-Pope Francis, General Audience
Saint Peter's Square,
Wednesday, 5 June 2013

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 29, 2018

All Are Welcome

Let us build a house where love can dwell
And all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
Rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;
*All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where love is found
In water, wine and wheat:
A banquet hall on holy ground,
Where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
Is revealed in time and space;
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

Text: 96 86 87 10 with refrain. Music: TWO OAKS.
Text and music: Marty Haugen, © 1994, G.I.A. Publications, Inc.

Psalm 145

The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.

One Bread, One Body

*One Bread, one body, one Lord of all
one cup of blessing, which we bless
And we, though many, throughout the earth
we are one body in this one Lord.*

Gentile or Jew, servant or free
woman or man, no more

Many the gifts, many the works
One in the Lord, of all

Grain for the fields, scattered and grown
gathered to one, for all

Tune: John Foley, SJ, b 1939
© 1978, John B. Foley, SJ, and New Dawn Music

“Ground Rules” for Small Group Faith Sharing

Maintain confidentiality – “Whatever happens in small group stays in small group.”
Judgment-free zone – You don’t have to agree with everyone, but you have to have respect for everyone.
No “shut downs” or “put downs” – See Christ in one another, BE Christ to one another.
Don’t be a “discussion hog” – Be sure that everyone that wants to gets a chance to share.
Leave room for the Spirit – Silence is OK! Not everyone has to share.
Practice active listening – Avoid interrupting, fidgeting, criticizing, lecturing, or thinking of what you’re going to say while another person is speaking.
Questions are a guide - You do not have to answer all of them or go in order.
Be open – God is doing amazing things!

Petitions

Our response: “Lord, you answer all our needs.”

Closing Prayer

O God, you open wide your hand, giving us food in due season. Out of your never-failing abundance, satisfy the hunger of body and soul and lead all peoples of the earth to the feast of the world to come. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

“Eucharist is possible when self defers to community, when serving others is exalted over being served, when superficial differences dissolve and the common and shared are honored above all else.”

- from *Living Liturgy*, Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time,

Questions for Reflection on the Gospel

1. What word, image, or phrase struck you from the Gospel?
2. In the Gospel, Jesus takes a relatively small number of gifts and multiplies them to exceed the needs of the crowd. What “small gifts” have you received that have made a big difference in your life and exceeded your expectations?
3. How do the words that John uses to describe Jesus’ actions remind us of the Eucharist?
4. In the First Reading, Elisha knows that twenty loaves won’t be enough to feed the crowd. He has to trust God over his own logic. Is this leap-of-faith kind of trust ever required in your life? Does such trust become easier with practice?
5. Also in the First Reading, both Elisha and the man from Baal-shalishah had to have faith that a miracle would happen. Do you consider miracles only “something that breaks the laws of nature”? Is that really true? Are there “everyday miracles” in your life to be found?
6. In the Second Reading, Paul reminds the brothers and sisters to “preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.” What do you do to preserve unity when it seems like unity is going on the rocks? Which would be better, to preserve the peace by not talking to anyone with whom we disagree, or preserve the unity by staying at the table and talking it out?
7. Read Pope Francis’ words on the reverse of this page. He says that the “food was shared fairly ... no one was deprived.” What are the implications for us regarding the inequality of resources and starvation all over the world?

