



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Cycle C

Fr. David Rosenberg
Institute for Spiritual Direction
visit us at <http://www.ISDministries.org/>

"They all ate and were satisfied." Luke 9:17

This miracle of the feeding of the five thousand is found in all four gospels. Feeding the hungry multitude is a profound Eucharistic event. Luke uses the same ritual words, called a "barakah," here as at the Last Supper and at Emmaus: "...looking up to heaven, he said the blessing... broke... and gave...." This "barakah" is the same blessing used at every Mass during the Offertory as the priest, looking up to heaven, says: "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness you gave us the bread we offer you... ..the wine we offer you..." Then, and now at every Mass, Jesus invokes our heavenly Father to take the mundane goodness of earthly elements offered by his people and imbue the offering with heavenly abundance, heavenly riches that will feed the multitude.

It is interesting that the word Luke uses for the fragments of bread left over is the word used by the Didache, a first-century document, to refer to the broken pieces of the Eucharistic bread. The default mode of human consciousness is to notice what you do not have and pull back into yourself. It is rare that we judge there is plenty. This is the syndrome I call the "culture of scarcity," reflected in every commercial we hear. Today we are called instead to gather and give thanks for what we have, appreciating the resources as a gift of abundance and not scarcity. Then we are transformed by the spiritual law of "freely receiving, freely giving." As we are the grain that falls upon the ground and dies, we are no longer a single grain with no life. We grow in new life, are filled and abundantly sow... "Whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will reap generously." 2 Cor 9:6

This profound account recalls that the hungry multitude was offered the blessed loaves and fish, and they all ate and were satisfied. On this Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, "Corpus Christi Sunday," we are reminded that we are to bear the Eucharist in procession, proclaiming that salvation, offered by the sacrifice of Christ, is for the whole world. In every corner of the world, our procession this day proclaims that Christ abides with us through all the sorrows of life, a holy people united as one mystical body of Christ. We offer our prayers of intercession, raised by Christ to God the Father. In Eucharistic Procession, we pierce the veil and bring forth the abundance of the heavenly kingdom to the hungry of spirit. We bring solace to those that suffer, comfort and healing to the broken hearted, reconciliation to the sinner, mercy to all through the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Today we show the world that we are a People of the Eucharist animated by the grace of our Creator. We break forth with song of gratitude that fills us up from the inside. Filled within, we flow outward in a "tsunami" of grace. This life freely given to us by our creator becomes the life we freely give away. We are here to break the bread and pour out the blood, Jesus' Eucharistic gesture. Recalled at every Mass, this gesture binds us in a golden cord of three strands: transcendence, gratitude and sacrifice. Thus imbued we give ourselves away, as we cry out "Kyrie, eleison."

Today let us reflect on the Eucharistic Miracle, Bread for the World freely given to all.
Let your heart settle into the Sequence for Corpus Christi:

*"Very bread, good shepherd, tend us;
Jesu, of your love befriends us;
in your eternal goodness send us into the land of life yet to see."*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Jesus spoke to the crowds about the kingdom of God,
and healed those who needed to be cured.

The day was drawing to a close,
and the twelve came to him and said,
*"Send the crowd away,
so that they may go
into the surrounding villages and countryside,
to lodge and get provisions;
for we are here in a deserted place."*

But Jesus said to them,
"You give them something to eat."

They said, *"We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we are to go and buy food
for all these people."*

For there were about five thousand men.

And Jesus said to his disciples,
"Have the people sit down in groups of about fifty each."

They did so and made them all sit down.
Then taking the five loaves and the two fish,
and looking up to heaven,
he said the blessing over them, broke them,
and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.
They all ate and were satisfied.
And when the leftover fragments were picked up,
they filled twelve wicker baskets.

The Gospel of the Lord

