

Isaiah 55:1-3 / Romans 8:35, 37-39 / Matthew 14:13-21

Bring Them Here to Me

“Bring them here to me.”

These are five simple words from today’s Gospel, but they contain a powerful message for every one of us.

Today’s Gospel begins with a touching detail that we can easily overlook. Jesus has just received the heartbreaking news that John the Baptist has been put to death. He withdraws to a deserted place, perhaps to grieve and pray. But the crowds hear where he has gone and follow him.

When Jesus sees them, he does not send them away. Even in his own sorrow, his heart is moved with compassion. He heals their sick and stays with them. That tells us something beautiful about Jesus. He never lets his own suffering keep him from caring for others.

As evening approaches, another problem arises. Thousands of people are hungry. The disciples see only one solution: “Send the crowds away so they can buy food for themselves.”

But Jesus has a different answer: “Give them something to eat yourselves.”

The disciples can see only what they lack. They have five loaves and two fish—hardly enough for such a crowd. They see a problem; Jesus sees people. The disciples focus on their limited resources, while Jesus focuses on the unlimited power of God.

Then Jesus says something simple but powerful: “Bring them here to me.”

Those words are meant for us as well. Whenever we face worries about our family, our health, our finances, our future, or anything that seems beyond our ability, Jesus says, “Bring them here to me.”

When we think our faith is weak, our strength is gone, or our efforts are too small to make a difference, Jesus says, “Bring them here to me.”

In the hands of the disciples, five loaves and two fish could feed only a few people. But in the hands of Jesus, they became more than enough. Everyone ate, everyone was satisfied, and twelve baskets were left over.

That is how God works. He does not ask us to begin with what we do not have. He simply asks us to place into his hands what we do have.

The Church itself began that way. Jesus did not choose the rich, the powerful, or the influential. He began with a handful of ordinary fishermen and simple men. They had many weaknesses and fears, but they placed themselves in the hands of Christ. Filled with the Holy Spirit, that small group grew into the Catholic Church, which today proclaims the Gospel and serves millions of people throughout the world.

St. Teresa of Calcutta is another beautiful example. When she began her mission among the poorest of the poor in the streets of Calcutta, she had almost nothing. She trusted completely in God and offered him the little she had. God multiplied her small beginning beyond anything she could have imagined. Today, the Missionaries of Charity serve the poorest of the poor in more than one hundred countries.

The same Lord who multiplied the loaves and fishes still works in the same way today. A little faith, a little generosity, a little kindness, a little time—when placed in his hands, even the smallest gift can become a blessing for many.

This is exactly the message of the first reading. Through the prophet Isaiah, God invites us: “Come, all you who are thirsty... come without money and without cost.” God knows that every human heart is hungry. We hunger for peace, forgiveness, hope, love, and lasting happiness. Yet we often look for satisfaction in money, success, possessions, or achievements. These things have their place, but they can never satisfy the deepest hunger of the human heart.

That is why God asks, “Why spend your money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?” Only God can satisfy the deepest longing within us. In the Gospel, Jesus not only feeds the hungry with bread but points to an even greater gift. He himself is the Bread of Life, the one who alone can satisfy our hearts.

Then St. Paul, in the second reading, gives us the reason for our confidence: “Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.” Not suffering, not illness, not failure, not disappointment, not even death. The same Lord who cared for the hungry crowd will never stop caring for us. His love never fails.

Every Mass is a continuation of today’s Gospel. Once again, Jesus takes bread, blesses it, and gives it to us. But now that bread is his very Body. He feeds us so that we may become bread for others through our compassion, generosity, and love.

So today, let us bring to Jesus whatever we have and whatever we lack. Let us bring him our worries, our fears, our weaknesses, and our hopes. In his hands, our little becomes enough. Our weakness becomes strength. Our hunger is satisfied. And nothing can ever separate us from his loving care.

Amen.