

## A Hungry World

Hunger is humanity's most fundamental instinct.

We all experience hunger.

We get hungry for food that sustains the body. We also hunger for all that makes us truly human: to love and to be loved, to forgive and to be forgiven, to belong and to be accepted for who we are.

Today's gospel is about a hungry crowd of people. They had followed Jesus into the wilderness. By day's end they were hankering for some food. But they were hungry for more than just dinner. They were craving something bigger, deeper. (Matthew 14:13-21)

Lots of people try to imagine how Jesus fed such a multitude with what seemed to be very little, "just a few loaves and fishes."

Were the loaves and fishes miraculously multiplied? Did two loaves become four, did four become eight? Did abundance suddenly spring from meager provisions? Who can limit the possibilities of what God can do?

Or, is it that Jesus got everyone to share what they had brought with them? Upon seeing the generosity of one person who offered the little they had, were others moved to share with one another? Perhaps they discovered that in sharing, that there was more than enough to go around.

Who knows? In debating how it happened we risk missing the point.

Could it be that the “immense hungry crowd” is us-you and me- as we navigate the wilderness of life?

And not only us, but our mothers and fathers, our grandparents, our ancestors; the greatest saints and the most notorious sinners?

This is story of all the hungers we bring to Mass and of the Christ who refuses to send us away empty.

It is the unfolding drama of being fed with the bread of unconditional love, so that our love be daring and bold.

It is about coming to the Lord’s Table and being served a huge helping of mercy so that we be kind and the world not become cold and heartless.

It is being fed with a firm hope “that nothing can separate us from the love of God,” not even death itself. We can live and die unafraid, because love is the end of the story.

You see, Christ never stops inviting us to be fed, so that we can pass on what we have received into our hands and hearts.

This world is a hungry place, a very hungry place.

May God's Grace compel us to become "bread of life" for one another.

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