

- Welcome to all of our visitors today.
 - Again—as I emphasize every time we have this story of the multiplication of the loaves—be aware of the erroneous of “pot luck” explanation of this account—that Jesus didn’t really multiply the loaves and the fishes...and that the people really had food all along, but were moved to share only because of Jesus’ preaching—and that SHARING was the so-called “miracle”.
 - Well...that’s no miracle at all.
 - Besides...the culture mores of the Middle East—then AND now—is to share what you have...even without Jesus around.
 - And...if everyone had enough to share and eat anyway, the apostles wouldn’t have been concerned, and Jesus wouldn’t have needed to feed them.
 - Then the Gospel says near the end that the apostles: “...*filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than [all the people] could eat.*”
 - The people wouldn’t have been ready to proclaim Jesus as the long-awaited prophet simply because of organizing a pot luck supper.
 - I think it might take just a little bit more than that...especially in that time with many false prophets and charlatans, as attested to by the rabbi Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles.
 - Add to this that Elisha in the first reading foreshadows Jesus when he multiplies 20 loaves for 100 people; God’s prophet doesn’t outdo God Himself.
 - The “pot luck” idea originated simply to de-divinize Jesus...to make Him just a good man with nice teaching...which conveniently removes the obligation to accept and follow His teaching.
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- But we still contend with that...perhaps more than ever.

- “Jesus was a good man, but not God; therefore I need not believe/follow all that He said.”
- But if one claims to be Christian, that seems to be quite a logical disconnect.
- Because if Jesus is God, and the scriptures are the Word of God... does it make sense for a Christian to disregard any of it?
- Certainly there are parts of the Bible that have more importance at some times than in others; for instance, the genealogies of Jesus would have been of vital importance for Jewish converts.
- But all of it is the inspired Word...and is given to Christ’s Church to lead us with authority on the interpretation of His Word.
- ...because we see what happens even when men and women even of good faith try to interpret it on their own: fragmentation and dissension. Thousands of different denominations—certainly the vast majority of them quite sincere in wanting to seek God’s truth, believing different interpretations of that very same Word.
- Certainly that’s not God’s plan...He who says in the Psalm: *“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”* (Psa 133:1 RSV)
- And that’s not blaming anyone in particular; there’s plenty of blame to go around for probably everyone in one way or another.
- Even the Pharisees and scribes argued with Jesus about the meanings in scripture—arguing the Word with the Word...always a losing proposition.
- ...and thus the unity of faith which Christ desires...to which St. Paul exhorts us to...is lost.
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- So let us have faith in the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to the Church in order to guide it, as He says: *“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...”* (Joh 16:13 RSV)
- ...not cherry-picking what the Church teaches, but trusting in that truth and unity God leads us towards.

- When we pick and choose from God’s Word, do we not make ourselves judges over God?
- And, after all, God desires only our good.
- And St. Paul writes to us from prison in our second reading: *“I... urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility...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...”*
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- So let us accept with joy His truth...for not all are privileged to hear it...for as He assures us: *“...blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”* (Mat 13:16-17 RSV)
- God rejects no one who comes to Him. His feeding of the 5000 shows that all are welcome to come to the Word.
- But coming to Him implies adhering to His teaching; for we Catholics, to the teaching of His Church...for we believe that He truly guides the Church...as He says before His Ascension into Heaven: *“I will be with you always, to the close of the age.”*
- And Jesus prays to the Father about His disciples...about US: *“Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth.”* (Joh 17:16-17 RSV)
- Some teachings in our day and age may be difficult for some to figure out or understand...but that in no way lessens their import.
- But we know that God directs us toward what is truly good in all things...and we have His promise that those who persevere to the end will be saved...and that the truth will set us free.

Reading I

[2 Kgs 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.

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18](#)

R. (cf. 16) **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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

Reading II

[Eph 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.

Gospel

[Jn 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.