

- There are always those who try to de-divinize Jesus by explaining away the miracles in the Gospel.
- Jesus' feeding of the multitudes is the main one...people try to explain away the multiplication of the loaves and fish by saying the people really had food squirreled away in their clothing, and that Jesus' convincing them to share it was the miracle.
- Uh...no. That's not what the Gospel says or implies at all.
- This story we just heard is another: some will say "Jesus (the carpenter from the landlocked village of Nazareth) saw the fish that these fishermen—who had been fishing their whole lives—did not see. Yeah; that makes sense.
- No...Jesus' purported miracles ARE miracles—supernatural events accomplished by the power of God...reported by men and women who actually experienced the events.
- Otherwise...Jesus would just be a charlatan...a deceiver...leading others to believe falsely in His power.
- Peter and Andrew...James and John...the hard-working cynical fishermen, wouldn't have stood for that.
- And Matthew—who gave up a lucrative tax collecting gig to go traipsing around the countryside with this wandering preacher—surely wouldn't have stood for that. To what advantage?
- Nope. Believe the Gospel. It IS truth.
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- Now a bit of a short homily today, because so many people's minds (especially Sunday) will be in San Francisco with visions of Broncos and Panthers in their heads. Sounds like the Superbowl should be on Animal Planet this year.
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- So...a couple of necessary administrative things and we'll continue with the Mass.
- First of all, remember that Lent begins with Ash Wednesday this Wednesday. Masses are at IHM at 6:30 a.m., and 12:10 and 6 p.m.

- Remember that Ash Wednesday is also one of the only two days of required fasting for those age 18-59, meaning one full meal and two smaller meals which do not add to a full meal. Not that hard.
- Also, no meat (abstinence) on Ash Wednesday or any Friday during Lent...and abstinence binds from age 14 onwards unless there is a medical reason for meat.
- The Knights of Columbus are generously going to help us all with abstinence with fish fries every Friday at 5 p.m....followed by Stations of the Cross at 7 if you'd like even more grace on those Lenten Fridays.
- Ash Wednesday is not a holy day of obligation...but what better way to kick off our penitential season...which focuses on disciplining ourselves toward greater holiness and simplicity.
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- Secondly...we also have our Annual Catholic Appeal kickoff today.
- As you know, the Archdiocese is dependent upon this annual fundraising for its own operations in evangelizing, aiding the poor and the disenfranchised...and, perhaps most direly needed, educating and training seminarians to be priests. The money for their education doesn't come out of thin air.
- And we need more priests. Fr. John is retiring in June; Fr. Prietto at San Isidro in Santa Fe just retired. Many priests in our archdiocese are past retirement age (70) and continue to work simply out of their devotion to God and to help alleviate the necessity.
- We are blessed to have about 35 seminarians at present, but it costs about \$1.5 million just to feed, train and house all of them every year. So these ACA funds are much needed.
- Fr. Chris Bernabe was educated with these. Tai—our seminarian from last summer...almost-Dcn Robert Bustamante, and all seminarians depend on these.

- Many of you will have received ACA letters and have given already; thank you for that.
- Dcn Don and his helpers will now pass out the forms, which you can fill out and return in the collection basket, bring to the office or send to the diocese on your own; the envelopes are pre-addressed.
- Please mark down our parish (IHM) when you donate, so that it will be counted to our assigned goal of \$90,000, which is easily reachable...especially if all contribute and be generous...and especially reachable in THIS community—one of the wealthiest in the nation.
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- Remember St. Paul: *“As for the rich in this world, charge them not...to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous...that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed.”* (1Tim 6:17-19 RSV)
- Did Jesus ever praise the wealthy? Nope; their wealth—or their means to obtain wealth (intelligence, drive, etc.)—are given them to help those in need, not for accumulating stuff for themselves.
- Why else would He tell the rich young man who had obeyed all the commandments and wanted to know how to enter the kingdom of Heaven: *“You lack one thing; go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”* (Mar 10:21 RSV)
- ...and the young man went away sad, because he had many possessions.
- Did he follow Jesus’ word? We don’t know. But, as one of the ancient monks of the desert said: *“We worship that with which we are preoccupied.”* What preoccupies us? Is it God, or something other than God?
- Whom did Jesus praise in the Gospels? Remember the poor widow who gave her last two copper coins—her last two pennies—to God? Her action was so noteworthy that the Gospel tells us

that Jesus “...called his disciples to him, and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living.” (Mar 12:43-44 RSV)

- And, of course, Jesus assures us: “Fear not, little flock...Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.” (Luke 12:32-33 RSV)
- So...be bold in generosity! He who loves little is given little, and, as Jesus tells us: “...the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you.” (Mar 4:24 RSV) Dare to put out into deep water...for Christ is with you.
- And God cannot...He WILL not...be outdone in generosity.
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- Our readings today—the call of Isaiah...the call of Peter—focus upon the vocations given by God.
- WE are given the vocation—the mission—to bring others to Christ...and it is the most wonderful, the most meritorious mission on earth.
- Let us seek to fulfill our duties in all things...by word, by example, and by generosity with the blessings given us...for by these things do we call down the grace and favor of God upon ourselves, our families, and upon the world.
- Have the faith and trust and love for our Lord to call out with Isaiah: “*Here I am; Send me!*”

## Reading I

[Is 6:1-2a, 3-8](#)

In the year King Uzziah died,  
I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne,  
with the train of his garment filling the temple.  
Seraphim were stationed above.

They cried one to the other,  
“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts!  
All the earth is filled with his glory!”  
At the sound of that cry, the frame of the door shook  
and the house was filled with smoke.

Then I said, “Woe is me, I am doomed!  
For I am a man of unclean lips,  
living among a people of unclean lips;  
yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”  
Then one of the seraphim flew to me,  
holding an ember that he had taken with tongs from the altar.

He touched my mouth with it, and said,  
“See, now that this has touched your lips,  
your wickedness is removed, your sin purged.”

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
“Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?”  
“Here I am,” I said; “send me!”

## Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 7-8](#)

**(1c) In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.**

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart,  
for you have heard the words of my mouth;  
in the presence of the angels I will sing your praise;  
I will worship at your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name.

**In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.**

Because of your kindness and your truth;  
for you have made great above all things  
your name and your promise.  
When I called, you answered me;  
you built up strength within me.

**In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.**

All the kings of the earth shall give thanks to you, O LORD,

when they hear the words of your mouth;  
and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD:  
“Great is the glory of the LORD.”

**In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.**

Your right hand saves me.

The LORD will complete what he has done for me;  
your kindness, O LORD, endures forever;  
forsake not the work of your hands.

**In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.**

## Reading II

[1 Cor 15:1-11](#) or [15:3-8, 11](#)

I am reminding you, brothers and sisters,  
of the gospel I preached to you,  
which you indeed received and in which you also stand.

Through it you are also being saved,  
if you hold fast to the word I preached to you,  
unless you believed in vain.

For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received:

that Christ died for our sins  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
that he was buried;  
that he was raised on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve.

After that, Christ appeared to more  
than five hundred brothers at once,  
most of whom are still living,  
though some have fallen asleep.

After that he appeared to James,  
then to all the apostles.

Last of all, as to one born abnormally,  
he appeared to me.

For I am the least of the apostles,  
not fit to be called an apostle,  
because I persecuted the church of God.  
But by the grace of God I am what I am,  
and his grace to me has not been ineffective.  
Indeed, I have toiled harder than all of them;  
not I, however, but the grace of God that is with me.  
Therefore, whether it be I or they,  
so we preach and so you believed.

## Gospel

[Lk 5:1-11](#)

While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening

to the word of God,

he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret.

He saw two boats there alongside the lake;

the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets.

Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon,

he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore.

Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon,

“Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.”

Simon said in reply,

“Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets.”

When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing.

They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them.

They came and filled both boats

so that the boats were in danger of sinking.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said,

“Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.”

For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him,

and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon.

Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”

When they brought their boats to the shore,

they left everything and followed him.