



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Prayer

Loving Father, You have prepared a table before us. May we recognize the unmerited gifts You have provided and always give thanks to You, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: 2 Kings 4:42-44

Over the next six weeks, we will be turning our attention toward a new theme: The Banquet of the Lord.

As is the case on most Sundays, the First Reading has a connection with the Gospel; 2 Kings 4:42-44 is no different.

Elisha the Prophet tells the servant with twenty barley loaves to feed a crowd of one hundred people. After some protest, the food is distributed and the crowd is satisfied and there was some left over. What a blessing!

We must admit that all of life is a blessing. When we forget this, we may become stingy and even greedy. This is why the Lord expects us to feed the hungry. When we feed the hungry crowds, we rely on the Lord — in turn — to supply our needs. This requires trust in God.

Obviously, this First Reading sets the stage for an even greater miracle found in our Gospel this weekend. Nevertheless, the point of this reading is to show that the blessings of God far exceed our expectations when we place our trust in Him.

Question

How has God exceeded your expectations?

Commentary

2nd Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6

We belong to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Our oneness comes from the One Lord and “Father of all” who does not abandon us or let us go hungry.

In our First Reading, we see that God’s desire to feed the crowd is directly related to His desire to gather us together as one. We belong to God and He belongs to us. Through Him, we belong to each other. We call this “Communion.”

Our Communion begins with our one Baptism in the Lord. As baptized Christians, we are called to be fed at the table of the Lord. Of course, while there is a oneness that we share with other Christians who are baptized, we are still far from sharing in the same bread or the same cup on Sundays.

This is due in part to the fact that many Christians do not share our Catholic belief that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. Other reasons (the authority of the Pope and Magisterium, differences in moral practices, and some theological differences, to name a few) prevent us from breaking bread together. This unfortunate reality must be overcome through prayer and continued dialogue between Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Question

In what way do you pray for unity in the Christian faith?

Are you interested in receiving free commentaries for your own personal or group reflections throughout the year?

**Visit us at Christ in Our Neighborhood
dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood**

Commentary

Gospel: John 6:1-15

The miraculous feeding in our First Reading is surpassed by the miracle in John’s Gospel. One may easily claim that Elisha’s feeding one hundred people with twenty barley loaves could easily be accomplished. However, there is no doubt that feeding five thousand people with only five barley loaves and two fish and the filling of twelve baskets with leftovers is truly a miracle.

If the miracle is greater, then so is the miracle worker. Jesus is recognized as a prophet greater than Elisha. Israel has been waiting for the “THE Prophet, the one who is to come into the world.” Filling the twelve baskets with the leftovers is a sign that the Lord has come to gather together the twelve tribes of Israel. It is no wonder that the crowd wanted to carry Jesus off immediately to make him king.

This Gospel has obvious Eucharistic overtones. Over these next five weeks, we will take a break from the Gospel of Mark and focus on the Gospel of John, particularly as it relates to what is commonly called, “The Bread of Life Discourse.”

Question

In what way does the Eucharist on Sunday feed you and satisfy you?

This Week’s Task

Write down a petition for someone other than yourself. Mentally, bring that petition with you to the Banquet of the Lord (our Mass) on Sunday. Present your prayer petition to the Lord:

Petition: _____

Prayer

The group offers this banquet prayer used commonly at Eucharistic Adoration:

Leader: You have given them bread from heaven:

All: Containing in itself all sweetness.

Together: O God, who under a wonderful Sacrament has left us a memorial of Your Passion; grant us, we ask You, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Your Body and Blood, that we may ever feel within ourselves the fruit of Your Redemption: Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The prayer continues with Psalm 145

Psalm

Response: 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.

Conclude with an Our Father