

Mt 14:13-21; Isa 55:1-3; Rom 8:35, 37-39 Something New

Something's happening here! Something new has come into the world!

Yes, life is difficult. They cut off his head--the head of John the Baptist. So, Jesus escaped by boat to a deserted place, to pray...

As we should do, every time we feel loss and despair. Turn to Our Father who cares.

But when the crowds heard that Jesus had gone away, they rushed to where He was. So there they were. And this has got to touch your heart:

*When [Jesus]...saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick* (Mt 14:14). Because something new was happening here: God's love, had come into the world!

What does God's love mean for us? It means God loves us more than Himself. Jesus could have sent them away. Jesus was tired. Sad. He needed to pray. Was He angry? Irritated?

No. His love and compassion for us is so great that it's impossible...He will never send anyone away. So, Jesus heals, teaches and feeds the 5,000.

What does God's love mean for us? It means God "actively" wills the good for us. God takes action.

The apostles make a reasonable request: *dismiss the crowds, so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves* (Mt 14:15).

But Jesus commands them to do the impossible: *give them some food yourselves* (Mt 14:16). In the same way, Jesus calls on us, to act through us, to love and care for others.

What does God's love mean for us? It means God heals our wounds. Because God is ever merciful.

In the first reading, 500 years before Christ, God was saying to His people that their captivity was ended. The rich and abundant food meant the blessings they would enjoy:

*Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life. I will renew with you the everlasting covenant (Isa 55:3).*

That's fantastic! It means even when we sin, God still loves us.

In fact, every time we receive the Holy Eucharist our venial sins are forgiven. Every time we go to confession our mortal sins are forgiven.

God takes us back, over and over again, so we can have everlasting life with Him in heaven!

What does God's love mean for us? It means God's love creates what did not exist.

*Taking the five loaves and two fish, and looking up to heaven, [Jesus] said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds (Mt 14:19).*

Then what happens is a miracle! There must have been 20,000 people there. But the bread keeps coming. And the fish keeps coming. Until everyone is satisfied and there is an overabundance left over—twelve wicker baskets full (Mt 14:20).

What happened there is about to happen here on that altar: God's love will create what did not exist: the bread and wine will be transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

And when He comes down from that altar...when we receive what He gives us, God will again create what did not exist: Jesus Christ alive in us, and us alive in Jesus Christ!

What does God's love mean for us? It means God's love for us is eternally faithful, loyal, unending, and everlasting.

Like the Risen Christ said to His disciples, and that means us: *behold, I am with you always, until the end of time (Mt 28:20)...*

And then He sent us His Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). So He can live in us!

Because like St. Paul said (second reading), nothing can separate us from the love of God: neither suffering in this life, nor death itself.

Not even supernatural powers like *angels* which are intermediaries between heaven and earth, *principalities* which are heavenly rulers, and *powers* which are powerful heavenly beings...

Nothing but nothing can separate us from the love of God for us!

But that's not all. Something more happening here!

You do realize that Jesus could have fed the crowds with the blink of an eye. But He didn't. He used what little they had, five loaves and two fish, and multiplied it.

You do realize it wasn't Jesus, but His disciples who gave the bread and fish to the crowds? What does that mean? That means us!

God loves us so much, that He wants us to share in His mission of salvation.

So listen heedfully (with your heart) to what He is saying to us: Jesus wants to use our faith and what little we have, to multiply it, and work His miracles for others through us!

So let us offer the gift of ourselves, what little we have—as a holy and living sacrifice...in union with Jesus Christ on that altar and on that cross, in the sacrifice of this Holy Mass—for the salvation of the world.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, we give you thanks for the love of God You have shown us, given us, and placed within us. Take what little we have, bless it and multiply it, and work your miracles for others through us!

Because something new is happening here...we live no longer us, but it is You Jesus Christ, who now lives in us (Gal 2:20).