



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Isaiah 55:1-3

Verse 2 asks, *"Why spend your money for what is not bread, and your wages for what fails to satisfy?"* What are some modern-day "wages" or things we "spend" our time on that leave us spiritually hungry?

In the reading, God calls out to those who are thirsty and offers water, wine, and milk without cost. In the Catholic tradition, what does this tell us about grace and our salvation? Why do we sometimes struggle to accept gifts that are entirely free?

Psalm 145:8-9, 15-16, 17-18

When have you experienced God's patience or slowness to anger in your own life? How might this have been God's justice in a way you did not expect?

What does it practically look like for you to look hopefully to God for your daily needs rather than relying solely on your own control or resources?

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Suffering is a mystery (often called redemptive suffering), but it doesn't mean God has stopped loving us. How can uniting our daily struggles with the Cross shift our perspective on hardship and allow us to conquer our trials while remaining close to Christ?

While nothing in creation can separate us from God's love, Catholic teaching reminds us that we possess free will and can choose to walk away from it through serious, unrepented mortal sin. Knowing that His grace is always present, what are concrete ways we can keep our hearts continually open to His love?

Collect

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,
and answer their prayers with
unceasing kindness,
that, for those who glory in you as
their Creator and guide,
you may restore what you have
created
and keep safe what you have restored.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever

Gospel

Matthew 14:13-21

The disciples initially look at the massive crowd and the scarcity of food and want to send the people away. When faced with a seemingly impossible or overwhelming task in your own life or ministry, do you try to rely solely on your own human resources, or do you bring your limits to Jesus? How can we build a habit of bringing our limits to Jesus?

Jesus chose to work *through* the Apostles to distribute the food to the people. What does this tell us about our role as Catholics in bringing Christ's grace and charity to a hungry world?

In the Gospel, Jesus provides nourishment for the crowds in abundance. How do we see God's grace in abundance through the Sacraments, specifically the Eucharist? In what ways can we be more receptive to this overflowing grace?