

Day 05 of the Novena Multiplication of Loaves

Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
July 21, 2026

2 Kgs 4: 42-44
Psalm 145: 10-11, 15-16, 17-18
Jn 6: 1-15

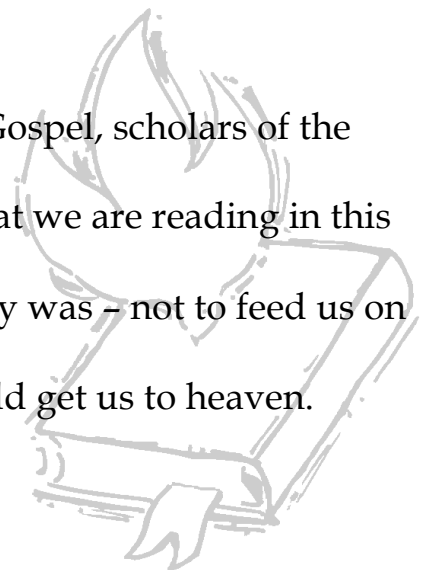
So this particular miracle story appears in all four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Mark mentions it twice. Matthew, Mark, and Luke do not really go further than Jesus feeds the multitudes, describing it as a miracle.

The Miracle of the Multiplication of Loaves Appears In...

- Matthew 14: 13-21
- Mark 6: 31-44
- Luke 9: 1-27
- John 6: 1-14

That said, the Gospel of John describes this story of the Multiplication of Loaves as a *sign*. Why is it a sign?

As is the case with the other signs in John's Gospel, scholars of the bible describe this miracle as a *Sign* because what we are reading in this text points to what Jesus' purpose on earth really was – not to feed us on earth but to give us the “bread of life” that would get us to heaven.



Obviously, God can feed the multitudes on earth. Obviously, God can heal the sick. Obviously, God can raise those from the dead. John's gospel describes all these miracles in this particular gospel. That said, the multiplication of loaves is a *Sign* because it points to the whole purpose of what Jesus is trying to do, what God is trying to do, what the Father is giving the Son through the Spirit that we receive, is that God wants us to get to heaven. The food the Father's Son gives us on earth to feed our bodies takes care of a day, but the food the Father's Son *really* wants to give us will feed us for the rest of our existence.

As we read in this particular gospel (which we repeat often during the three liturgical years) when the people who were satisfied with the food for the day want to make Jesus a king, it is then that the Father's Son explains His true purpose on earth, to eat his body and drink this blood, to be nourished by the word and this "sacrament" is passed down through the apostles and the bishops, through the priest and shared with the community.

What we find out in this story and the problem that results are that a) the people whose food hunger was satisfied do not believe that Jesus is

the heavenly Father's Son and that b) they could not embrace eating the body and blood of the Father's Son. The problem with the story is that the people in this world did not want to be fed in the soul, just like those of today's age do not want to focus on the soul – so many in today's age solely want bodily food that gets them through a day.

Unfortunately to this way of thinking and living, you get through one day, but that is only one day, *not* the rest of a person's existence. Those of the world do not think of that beyond the world or beyond the senses – they think of the physical but do not embrace the metaphysical.

As you all know, we diligently work hard to assist the food pantries of our area. We constantly devote ourselves to feed the needy in our communities. Of course, we are going to spend tens of thousands of dollars to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars of food and resources to the people in need. Two years ago, I preached about spending \$7,500 of my own money in one year renting U-Haul trucks to bring all kinds of resources to the communities we serve. We have received warehouses full of desks and clothes and all kinds of computer items and iPads and things of that nature to make sure that people

know that they are loved. The Poor Clares of Minooka have populated all my houses with religious items and pictures and statues because they wanted to make their presence felt in communities that they had never visited.

If people really embraced what God was and is trying to do and why did and does those things, then we understand the *True Sign* that comes from this overflowing charity – that God is God and God *wants* to give us his love overflowing in this way. God *wants* to feed our bodies but, infinitely more importantly, wants to feed our souls with the body, blood, soul, and divinity of the Father's Son.

If we truly believed this, then we would have fill the church with the faithful of the world. The problem is, what ended up happening back then in the First Century is what is happening today – since the 1960s after Vatican II, people interpreted Vatican II according to the way *they* wanted to live according to the laws of the flesh, which gave them a reason *not* to come to church, *not* to follow God's way and to abandon God now as people did two thousand years ago. As a result of a lack of faith, people of today's age justify that they can build a personal

relationship with God without the Church that God established on the cross, which often means that people choose not to build any relationship with God at all until it becomes much too late.

We learn through the teachings of the Church that Jesus' blood and water flowing out of His side at the time of his crucifixion was the union of humanity and God wedded in that special marriage that allows us to be with God so God could carry us to heaven. Without this Church, without this body and blood to nourish us, essentially we are lost. *That* is what God was teaching us then and what God teaches us now.

As it is, just like two thousand years ago, so many good people abandon God because they do not believe or wish to believe. For the last fifty or sixty years since the Second Vatican Council, many seem to be drawing themselves away from that message that the Father's Son preached in John 6. May people think that they can get to heaven on a personal basis with God without the Church leading and guiding them.

We come to these Novena Masses because we know that *this* is the Church that God established on the cross. *This* is the institution that we have been given. Through God, the impossible becomes possible; the

dead can rise again. People who have faith receive spiritual blessings (and sometimes *physical* ones from God). Just as importantly, those invested in the faith life of the Church know they are not alone and that *you* are not alone.

If people actually believe that, if people ran to the Father's Son instead of running away from him, then these churches would be full because people would realize that in order to get to heaven, we need to receive this body and receive this blood. That said, this revelation did not happen two-thousand years ago and it is certainly not happening today. The more Jesus tried (and tries) to explain what His Father was giving Him to present to the people of the world, the more people turned away from Jesus. Instead of running towards God, many turned (and turn) away from God.

We learn in this "Bread of Life" passage that only a very few remained with Jesus at the end of this passage of the Bread of Life narrative, that after Jesus had told the people and explained to them how they could get to heaven, they abandoned God then as many abandon God now. They abandoned the Father's Son, and only a few

remained. To those who remained, Jesus asked them, “Why have you not left?” And Peter responded on behalf of the few in such an important response in John 6: 58, “Where else are we to go? You have the words of eternal life.”

For those few of us who remain, *that* is why we are here. As Pope Benedict XVI once said when he was a bishop, *we* are the remnant of the Church; *you* are the remnant of the Church. For the few who remain, we understand what God is trying to do. For the few that remain in this novena, we are understanding what God wants us to do to get to heaven, which is why we are having a parallel Novenas in English and Spanish on the nine days prior to July 26.

Towards that end, we received a substantial donation to invite a priest named Sebastian Genoni (a pastor in Buenos Aires, Argentina) to lead a Spanish Novena for St. Anne, the Mother of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Fr. Sebastian has a strong devotion to St. Anne and will explain why we are doing what we are doing. If we can get the Hispanic community to promote this devotion and Novena, if we can get our Hispanic community to repopulate our pews during our Novena and

Feast Day, then hopefully in future years, the Novena will continue with a new generation of faithful believers.

All we are trying to do is teach people about the importance of what we call the *Real Presence* of God, the body and blood of our Lord. At the end of this video, I will have a short presentation that I offered years ago about the Real Presence and God's gift to us through His body and His blood.

Please, please, please continue to pray for us, to pray for those who are in need, to ask God for the intercession for us to grow together, pray together, and love together. I promise you, we will continue to do what we can to bring communion to the homebound, to bring communion to the needy, to tell you that we love you in the best way possible. All we ask you to do is to continue to believe what God has taught us, what God has passed down to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Do not forget that. Do not take it for granted.

Come to church. Be invested in the faith. Join us in prayer so all of us can teach and love and pray and serve in God's name for the sake of the people that we meet. This is our prayer.