



CELEBRATING AT HOME

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Kingdom of God in everyday life (Matthew 14:13-21)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God
to be the Church,
the Body of Christ in this world.

Lord Jesus,
you guide us in the way of truth.

Lord Jesus,
you reveal to us God's love.

Lord Jesus,
you teach us to share God's love with each other.

Scripture Reading *(Matthew 14:13-21)*

When Jesus received the news of John the Baptist's death he withdrew by boat to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. But the people heard of this and, leaving the towns, went after him on foot. So as he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and took pity on them and healed their sick.

When evening came, the disciples went to him and said, 'This is a lonely place, and the time has slipped by; so send the people away, and they can go to the villages to buy themselves some food.' Jesus replied, 'There is no need for them to go: give them something to eat yourselves.' But they answered, 'All we have with us is five loaves and two fish.' 'Bring them to me', he said. He gave orders that the people were to sit down on the grass; then he took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing. And breaking the loaves he handed them to his disciples who gave them to the crowds. They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected the scraps remaining, twelve baskets full. Those who ate numbered about five thousand men, to say nothing of women and children.

Reflection - *The Kingdom of God in everyday life*

This week's Gospel is the beginning of a new section of St Matthew's Gospel which talks about the Kingdom of God on earth and the Church as a visible sign of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom is found where human beings are. It is deeply enfolded and immersed in the world of human experience: hunger, fear, disease, the sound of sheer silence, celebration, joy, hope, forgiveness, mercy, justice, in hearing and keeping the word of God. The kingdom is made present especially when human needs are responded to and transformed with the life of God.

In today's Gospel, we encounter several human situations: Jesus' own need to grieve the death of John the Baptist; a large group of distressed people who search him out; a large group of hungry people; a group of disciples in training.

Jesus is moved with compassion for the crowd in spite of his own grief. As evening approaches, the disciples want to send the people away, but Jesus wants to feed them. He invites the disciples into a moment of reflection, training them to have confidence, to show initiative, to be leaders.

Jesus uses the common Jewish meal ritual of blessing, breaking and giving to feed the crowd with just five loaves and two fish. By working with Jesus and entrusting him with the little they have, the huge crowd is fed. What, at first, seemed so inadequate became more than enough.

Like Jesus, the disciple has to learn how to touch the world of human need with the transforming life of God.

Like the huge crowd we can be oblivious to God's action revealed in the goodness of other people.

Sometimes we, too, need to lift up our heads to see what is really happening and recognise how many times in the ordinary circumstances of life God favours us with moments of grace. God continually invites us to see what is really going on and how extraordinary the ordinary can be when we see with God's eyes.

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Prayers of Intercession

Gracious God,
you are the bread of life and the source of our love.

May we choose life,
and enable others to find the life within them.

In these changing and challenging times,
make us a source of nourishment for each other.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our treasure.
You are the hope that sustains us
and the life that empowers us
in these changing and challenging times.

May your Spirit continue to come to life in us
and in our world, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
carry us gently through the week ahead.
Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
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