

July 29, 2018

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Do we understand the signs we see?

2Kings4:42-44

Psalm 145:10-11, 15-18

Ephesians 4:1-6

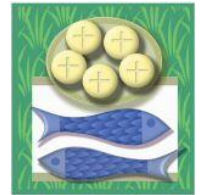
John 6:1-15

Twenty loaves of bread were brought to Elijah for a hundred hungry people. Over objections they were distributed to the people and when they had all eaten there was some left over. This is in accordance with the word of the Lord, "They shall eat and there shall be some left over."

The Psalmist encourages the faithful to bless the Lord, speak of his might, and praise the glory of God's kingdom. All eyes look to the Lord who can satisfy desires. He is just in his ways, holy in all his works, and near to all who call upon him in truth.

Paul encourages the brothers and sisters in faith to live in a manner worthy of their call. They are to be humble, gentle, and patient with one another, bearing with each other through love. They are to strive to preserve the unity of their community spirit. There is one body, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all.

A large crowd followed Jesus and the disciples were worried about how to feed them. There were only five barley loaves and two fish available. Jesus took the loaves, blessed them and gave thanks as he began to distribute them. Afterwards they filled twelve baskets with what was left over. The people recognized Jesus as a prophet and he withdrew to the mountain alone.



*There is one Father, One Son, One Holy Spirit.
One in Three, Three in One.
One God of all!*

The crowds saw the signs of healing that Jesus performed but did not understand their significance. Jesus gave them bread but they did not comprehend that Jesus was the bread come down from heaven. The old ways of relating to God were replaced with the new spiritual ways instituted by Jesus. We are to live in a manner worthy of our faith traditions and are reminded of this as we receive Jesus in the form of signs: bread and wine.

Christ's presence is the companionship of those he has called like us. "Christ is realized in us and among us through our companionship." The very word companion derives from the two Latin words *cum* meaning "with" and *panis*, which means "bread". A companion is literally "bread-with-us" - in other words, everything we need. This literally is the Eucharist! The Eucharist proclaims that God is not a distant fact towards which human beings strive with great effort. "Rather he is Someone who has joined man on his path, who has become his companion." (L. Giussani)

In the Sacrament of the altar, writes Pope Benedict XVI, the Lord meets us and becomes our companion along the way. True joy, he says, is found in recognizing that the Lord is still with us, our faithful companion along the way. For as Saint Thomas Aquinas pointed out, no possession is joyous without a companion. (Fr. Peter John Cameron, O.P.)

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