

1. Read (Seek) — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate (Find) — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray (Ask) — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate (Taste) — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence. **How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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Link to Liturgy**



[1] Entrance Antiphon, 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

[2] Order of the Mass

[3] Order of the Mass

[4] Matthew 6:6

[5] Order of the Mass

[6] Matthew 14:13-21

[7] Order of the Mass

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? Matthew 14:13-21 — Pg. 1

What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3

What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4

Gospel Reading – Matthew 14:13-21 – Roman Missal - Cycle A (OT18)

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.” Jesus said to them, “There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.” But they said to him, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have here.” Then he said, “Bring them here to me,” and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over – twelve wicker baskets full. Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.

Spiritual Reading – Divine Intimacy

From the Interior Castle by Saint Teresa of Avila

Ah! My Lord, your help is absolutely necessary for me; without You I can do nothing. In Your mercy, O God, do not allow my soul to be deceived and to give up the work it has begun. Give me light to know that my whole welfare depends on perseverance.

Make me understand that my faith in You must rise above my misery, and that I must never be alarmed if I feel weak and fearful. I must make allowance for the flesh, remembering what You said, O Jesus, in Your prayer in the garden: “The flesh is weak...” If You said that Your divine and sinless flesh was weak, how can I expect mine to be so strong that it does not feel afraid? O Lord, I do not wish to be so preoccupied with my fears nor to be discouraged at my weakness. On the contrary, I wish to trust in Your mercy, and to have no confidence whatever in my own strength, convinced that my weakness comes from depending on myself.

Prayer and Liturgy: The Deserted Place – Lesson and Discussion

“This is a deserted place and it is already late”

“O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me! You are my rescuer, my help; O Lord, do not delay.”[1] Prayer and especially the Liturgy is the “deserted place” that we are called to by Jesus. How many times have we heard people say that Liturgy is boring? Whether it is Divine Liturgy (Mass) or Liturgy of Hours (Prayer) it is a move from our comfortable world into a “deserted place” where at times we fill out of place, bored and maybe uncomfortable. It is in this “deserted place” of the Liturgy that we call out for help. We call out for peace. Many times when we are uncomfortable, we move around and fidget. Our uncomfortable nature, especially when it comes to prayer and liturgy express to us how restless we truly are and that we can only rest in God.

How do we call out for help and peace in the Liturgy? The beginning of Liturgy of the Hours begins with, “God, come to my assistance, Lord, make hast to help me.” In this Gospel there is a need. The people are hungry. In our hearts there is the same need, we are hungry. The disciples, realizing the need of the people and of themselves, turn to Jesus and say, “Lord, make hast to help us.” One of the greeting that can be used during the introductory rite at Mass is, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”[2] If a Bishop is saying Mass instead of the usual, “The Lord be with you,” the Bishop says, “Peace be with you.” At the beginning of both the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours we seek and ask for peace. A peace that will give us rest in our uncomfortable nature.

In the Roman Rite a well-known plea for peace comes right after the Our Father, where the priest prays, “Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.”[3]

Liturgical Prayer (Mass, Adoration, Liturgy of the Hours) naturally creates a “deserted place” for us, by placing our self in the presence of God and having us call out to God. We should and can create this “deserted place” each time we pray. Jesus says, “When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.”[4] The inner room does not have to be a physical location, but rather the inner room of our soul.

How is the Mass like the feeding of the five thousand? At the Mass the priest prays, “On the day before he was to suffer, he took bread in his holy and venerable hands, and with eyes raised to heaven to you, O God, his almighty Father, giving you thanks, he said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT, FOR THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.”[5] The Priest is *in Persona Christi*, in the person of Christ

and thus performs the same actions and says the same words as Jesus. “Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.”[6] At the end of the feeding of the five thousand, “They all ate and were satisfied.” They were at peace. We too should be at peace after receiving our Lord in the Eucharist. We should be able to live out the dismal prayer, “Go in peace.”[7]

Chapter 13 and 14 of Saint Matthew’s Gospel also follow the structure of the two parts of the Mass. Chapter 13 speaks of parables as Christ the Good Teacher preaches the Word of God to us in the mystery of parables. This is the Liturgy of the Word. In chapter 14 we have the feeding of the five thousand, in which Jesus feed us in a mysterious and miraculous way, this is the Liturgy of the Eucharist