

In 1989, a young priest in Poland taught at the seminary in his diocese. Each year, there had been fewer candidates entering the seminary, rarely more than 8 or 9, and it was becoming a serious concern for the seminary and the diocese. One day, this priest had a severe headache; he was brought to check his health in a hospital and learned that he had a terminal illness, the last stage of the brain cancer, with only a few months to live. The doctor told the priest that get ready and be prepared because severe pain in his head will be increasing each day. First, the priest was terrified and full of fear not just because of the pain, but because he was too young to die. Many questions “why” came up to his mind: why me? Why this time? Why this way? Shortly afterwards, he turned to God and said:

"Lord Jesus, I will do my best to offer up the sufferings that lie ahead of me, whatever they may be, but I would ask you for only **one thing** that you send us 18 new candidates for next year's incoming class for this diocese"

The good priest faced an excruciating death, but a few months later when the candidates started showing up at the seminary, there were exactly 18 new seminarians in the class for that diocese. No fewer, no more. 18 seminarians were the number.

The priest offered his suffering to the Lord to pray for vocations for his diocese. And his diocese is satisfied with the numbers of priesthood vocations.

We also learn in the Gospel today that the little boy offers 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish to Jesus so that God's people can be satisfied their hunger.

What can we offer to the Lord so that He can satisfy the Church, His people or perhaps the need for vocations in our own diocese? Offering is not only done during the Lenten Season, but each one of us should do that every day. It doesn't need to be something big, it can be something very small. And when done with our great love for God and, for his people, our offering to God can satisfy God's people.