

Food is one of the basic needs to all of us. Without food we cannot live and everyone has the right to have it. Hunger is increasing in many countries. According to the UN report, an estimated 820 million people did not have enough to eat in 2018. The report also estimates that over 2 billion people, mostly in low- and middle-income countries, do not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food. On the one hand, we see people wasting food because of its abundance, on the other, people starving to death for its lack. Of course, there is no lack of food on earth, rather there is a lack of sharing concern for others. If all those who have will share with what they don't have, the poor and the hungry, the world will be able to regain its balance. This can only happen when we are all moved by compassion and a feeling of sharing and concern for others.

Today's liturgy invites us precisely to be compassionate and to share what we have with others. In the Gospel we see that crowds followed Jesus, and He felt compassion and performed for them one of his most amazing miracles, the multiplication of five loaves and two fish. The crowds followed Jesus to listen to him and be cured of various diseases. They were hungry and thirsty for the Word of God. He heals them, as they are crippled and injured in body and spirit. Jesus taught them because they were thirsty and hungry for the word of God, he fed them because they were physically tired and hungry in the desert. Then Jesus makes a gesture that makes one think of the sacrament of the Eucharist: "He raised his eyes to heaven, said the blessing, broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowd. The miracle consists in the fraternal sharing of a few loaves which, entrusted to the power of God, not only are they enough for everyone, but they even advance, until they fill twelve baskets.

Once a boy was walking on the seashore and noticing thousands of starfish being washed ashore due to the tidal waves. A lot of people were just walking normally crushing these fishes under their foot. But this particular boy felt so sympathy for those star fish and so walked with more care; Once in a while he stooped down and picked up a starfish and threw it back into the sea. One man who saw what he was doing challenged him: "oh young man" he said, "what do you think you are doing; With the thousands of starfish on the shore, what difference does it make throwing one or two back into the sea?" The boy slowly bent down, picked one more starfish and threw it back into the sea and said: "it surely will make a lot of difference for this particular fish."

Sometimes we too can tend to think that the little we are able to do is not really going to make any substantial difference, so why to do it? But in the gospel, we see that the little they were able to do is multiplied by God's grace in such a way that it becomes more than sufficient for the need. May be all that Jesus needs from us, is our "five loaves and two fish" to feed the hungry crowds of the world.

The love and generosity of Jesus in attending to the needs of the hungry crowd offer us an insight into his own total self-giving for others at the Last Supper and in his suffering and death, which we celebrate in every Eucharist. Jesus' miracle of the loaves and fish, which responded to the physical hunger of the crowd, foreshadowed his miracle at the Last Supper when he shared himself in the Eucharist — the Bread of Life — with his disciples, thereby satisfying their spiritual hunger.

Today there are many people in the world who suffer all kinds of hunger – for food, for love, for respect, for recognition, for peace and these days to overcome the pandemic etc. God is able and willing to satisfy all our hungers. But God is also waiting for us to give up our "five loaves and two fish," which God needs to make the miracle possible. The question is: Am I ready to share my "five loaves and two fish" for those who are hungry. This needs also complete trust and faith in the providence of God for us and love and compassion for others. Let us pray to the Lord to fill us with the grace to be an instrument in His hands and reflect His love and compassion to the poor and needy in our own way. Amen.