

Fr Ryan Homily 8/2/2020

Read: Isaiah 55:1-3 (112A); Romans 8:35, 37-39; Matthew 14:13-21

The first thing that we gotta know today as we listen to the readings is that they are filled with comfort. They're filled with God always being our side, with God taking care of us. With the first reading it talks about come to me all who are thirsty, come with no money, come. So, the Lord is simply calling us to come to Him. Then the responsorial psalm says the hand of the Lord feeds us, He answers all our needs. Then in the second reading is where it says that nothing, NOTHING can separate us from that love that He has for us; nothing. And then here we go to the Gospel and in the Gospel here's Jesus and He's just found out that his cousin has been killed, John the Baptist, and He goes away by Himself away from people. And He goes by Himself because He's hurting. Someone He loved has just been killed and what do they do? They found out and went after Him so that He could help them. They couldn't even let Jesus grieve in that moment because they all wanted something. Now if that was me in Jesus' place, I think I would've gotten kind of mad. I'd say can't you give me one day to grieve over a friend of mine who was killed? Get outta here, give me a day. I'd say that because that's of course a very human way to respond but Jesus what does he do? He has pity on them, he healed them. He didn't send them away because Jesus is not just human like me, He's God. Jesus, God, is always more concerned about us than He is about Himself. And that's the first thing to take away from these readings today. God is always more concerned about us than He is about Himself. And just think about that; God is always more concerned about you than He is about Himself. And so, whenever we come to Him with all our needs, with all our hungers, wherever we're at He meets us where we're at and embraces us and as we hear at the end of the Gospel, He satisfies us. He Himself, not whatever He can give us, He is enough to satisfy us. And that's where this Gospel is trying to lead us to. Let's just say, hypothetically, that whatever you prayed for today here in church Jesus grants you, hypothetically. Healings, cures, abilities, financial stability, whatever you asked for God gives you. And before you get home you find out via phone call or some other way that a miracle has happened. And you find out that what you asked for, what you prayed for Jesus granted. Now if that were to happen for everybody, I mean people would be talking about that for years. They would say do you remember that day in August 2020, it was a really crummy year

up until that day, but then there was this explosion of miracles and all these ways that God was being generous to us. Hypothetically let's say that that happens today. Now, here is my very bold claim to you: even if God were to do all of that, the miracle that's already going to take place here at mass is still greater and I'm talking about the Eucharist. Because everything else that Jesus could give us are gifts from His heart, they're signs of His love that are eventually gonna fade away. But the Eucharist is Jesus' heart; it's Him, God with us. And only He can finally satisfy us because only He can keep us alive for eternity. Now the other miracles they might be more flashy, they might get talked about more, they get more headlines but the Eucharist- that's the real miracle. And that's where this Gospel is pointing to. We call it a pre-figurement. Here in the Gospel He's performing a miracle to make more bread for people to fill their stomachs with food. Here at mass, He again, is just taking a small amount of bread and He's not making more of it He's doing something more incredible, He's making it into His body so that He can fill our souls with Himself. Now this miracle in the Gospel, the multiplication of loaves, it's the only one that's recounted in all four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and just to be clear the miracle is not that Jesus got them to share, there's nothing miraculous about that. It makes it very clear He had only 5 loaves and 2 fish, He didn't have enough to share. The miracle is that somehow in giving the little that they had the Lord was able to multiply that so that everyone was satisfied. And this Gospel it makes clear, as it always does in the Gospel where Jesus performs a miracle, that the response of the crowd to Jesus was shock. It was amazement, even bewilderment, it was wonder, it was awe. The people's minds were blown when Jesus performed a miracle for them. Several times in the Gospels, Jesus will look at a dead person and say no, this isn't right, get up and that dead person would be alive again. Jesus did that, He raised Lazarus, He raised Jairus's daughter, He raised the widow of Nain's son. He brings the dead back to life and of course they were only to go on to die again, eventually. Which is why even that miracle, raising a dead person though amazing, it pales in comparison with the miracle of the Eucharist. Because the Eucharist is food that is gonna keep your soul alive for ever. Even once our bodies have died here on earth our soul is gonna live on into eternity in the Heavenly Kingdom. The point is, how is it that the experience of the people who encounter Jesus in the Gospel was constant amazement and we can sometimes walk in here expecting nothing. We say if I had been there and saw that miracle of the 5,000

were feed with 5 loaves and 2 fish certainly, I would've told people about that, but I haven't seen it. Right. What you're about to see and what I'm about to see blows that stuff outta the water. Right, because ordinary bread and ordinary wine that's over on the credence table right now are gonna be brought to the altar and God is going to send the Holy Spirit down and make that bread and that wine really become His body, blood, soul, and divinity. Who is then going to hand Himself to us, in this place today, so that He can send us out to give to those some of the food ourselves? And by all means, that means taking care of people materially because if we don't take care of those in poverty or in great need then we aren't living a life of faith. But not just to take care of them materially, and not even primarily, for the famine that is deepest is not for food, and the cure most needed is not from a virus, what people long for the most, even if they don't realize it, is to know beyond a shadow of a doubt, with the conviction that Paul has in that second reading, the love of which nothing can separate us from Christ, the love that He has for us. That is what the world hungers for. Last week, Jesus asked us a question in the Gospel- do you understand these things, do you get it? This week, He makes a plea through the words of Isaiah. Why do you work so hard for things that can't satisfy you? All the stuff we could ask for, and there's nothing wrong with asking for it, He wants us to. But all the miracles Jesus could grant for us, what He's already going to give us from this altar is greater because it's Himself. And we need this more than any of that other stuff. If we ask God for anything that isn't Himself, even if He grants it, were still gonna be left hungry. And even if all He were to ever give is Himself that will satisfy our hunger if we only allow that gift to transform us. Whatever we or anyone else might ask God for, the true hunger as St Paul says, is the knowledge of the love of God revealed in His son Jesus Christ. What is that knowledge? It's that God loved us so much He became one of us and then we killed Him. And even after we killed Him, He returned in love and mercy and forgiveness. And if killing God can't separate us from His love, nothing will. That's not just knowledge that's information it's an encounter. And that encounter is gonna happen today. It'll happen when we head the Lord's command through this profit Isaiah, to come to Him and we receive Him in the Eucharist so that He can satisfy us. And it's not us who have to figure it out, it's on God to reveal it to us by the power of His Spirit. But it is on us to ask God to help us understand what's happening. So, I would suggest that's all that we should occupy ourselves with doing for the remainder of mass. Lord, help me

to know what's going on here, help me to see what's about to happen, help me to know who it is who's about to give Himself to me, help me to know the love you have for me, a love that will satisfy me like nothing else I could ask Him for. And then fill me with a zeal to go out there and to bring that food, that knowledge, that encounter to the world in which we live; a world hungering beyond measure Lord, for you.

Amen