

Going Deeper-18th Sunday (Year A)

Scripture

The readings this weekend are:

- + Isaiah 55:1-3
- + Romans 8:35, 37-39
- + Matthew 14:13-21

More Than Enough

This liturgy focuses on **Matthew 14:13-21**, which is Matthew's version of 'the feeding of the 5,000.' This is notably the only miraculous event that appears in all four Gospels and therefore one of the most recognizable miracles of all. The story is rich in symbolism for modern Catholics and ancient Jews alike.

To contextualize this passage, it is helpful to consider Matthew's intended audience. Scholars and theologians theorize that the author of Matthew's gospel was likely a Jewish man writing to a Jewish audience. As a result, his Gospel makes a strong case for Jesus as the Messiah. Reading Matthew, we find various references to how Jesus fulfills messianic prophecies, up to the point that Peter outright proclaims, "You are the Messiah" (Mt 16:16). Some messianic prophecy stated that the Messiah would repeat many miracles and signs, including a miraculous feeding similar to the quail and manna in the desert (Ex 16). The feeding of the 5,000 was therefore a crucial event from Jesus' ministry to record and share with a Jewish audience.

As Catholics, we can find other layers of meaning in this miracle including the importance of community. One might suggest that the source of this miraculous meal is equally as important as the miraculous multiplication itself. Despite having little to eat in comparison to the size of the gathered crowd, someone (the person is left unnamed in Matthew's account) has offered up all that they have in order to help others. In return, Jesus blesses the gift and multiplies it among all who are gathered.

After reflecting on this Scripture, a few lingering questions remain-'What can you can bring to the Lord?' and 'What gifts can you ask Him to multiply in your community?' The feeding of the 5,000 gives us confidence that when we humbly come before God and share all that we have, truly miraculous things can happen.