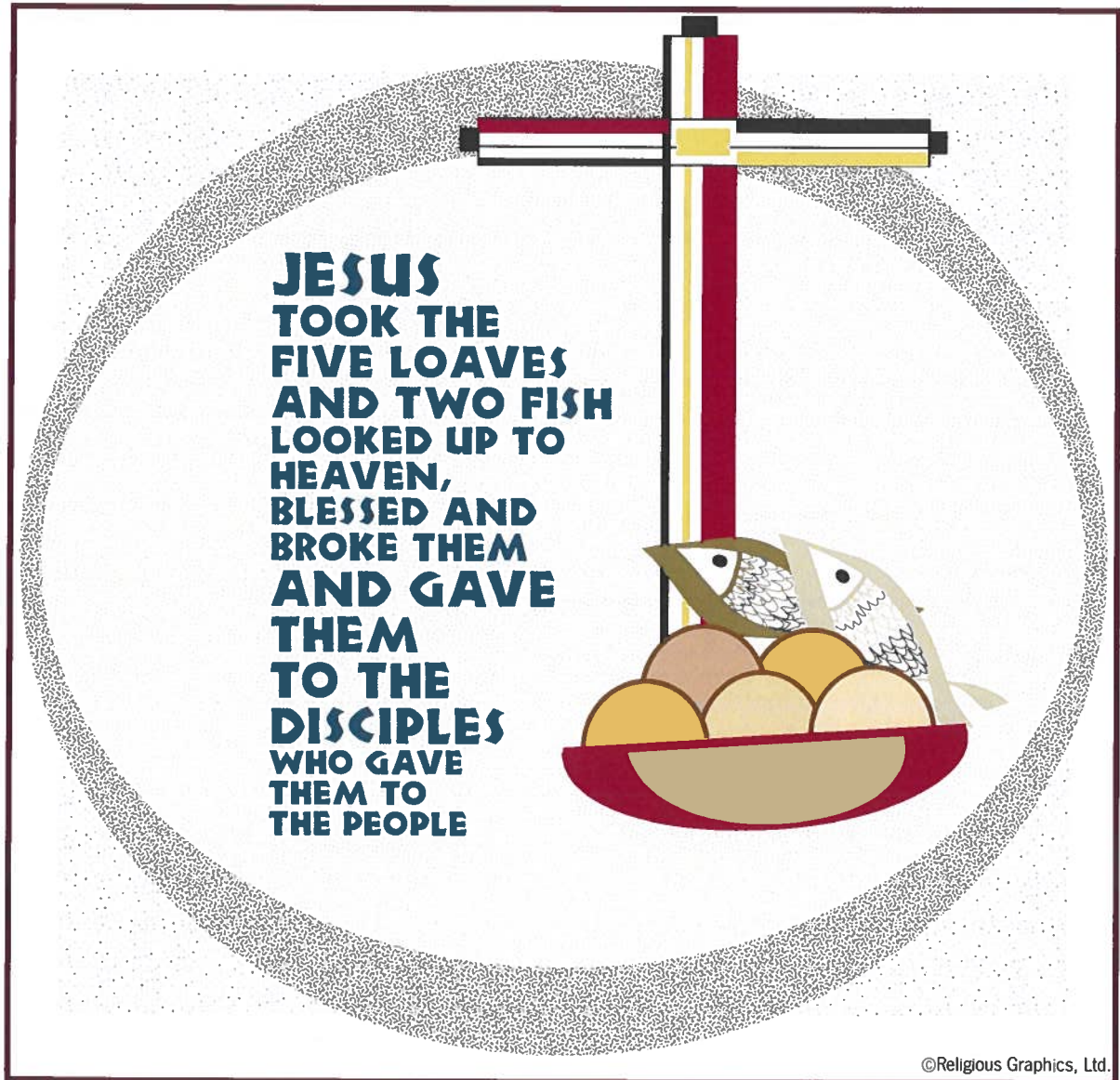


The Roman Catholic Parishes of
Sacred Heart, Goodrich
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 1-2, 2026



Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 5:00 pm Sun. 10:30 am
Sacred Heart Sun. 7:30 am
St. James Sun 9:00 am

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary Sat. 4:15 pm—4:45pm

Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable -" Father, I am seeking: I am hesitant and uncertain, but will you, O God, watch over each step of mine and guide me?"

~St. Augustine of Hippo

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time				August 1-2, 2026
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, August 8 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, August 9 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, August 9 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, August 9 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Roger Jensen Dave Emling Bob Schultz Galen Fritz	James Mallaney David Kirkpatrick	Jeff Martin Jeff Steinke Dallas Ferris Duane Papineau	Kim Smicker Brent Fulton Larry Wolles Darren Lovell
Lector	Rob Landeck	Rhonda Berns	Carrie Abrassart	Dana Masching
Eucharistic Minister			Dena Coy	
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Dallas Ferris R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	The Lovells

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, August 3 (SMM)

8:00 am +Marie & Ron Anderson

Tuesday, August 4 (SJ)

8:00 am +Walter & Mary Pieszka (Angie Kmetz)

Wednesday, August 5 (SJ)

8:00 am +Joe & Darlene Peerbolte (Ron/Vicki Peerbolte)

Friday, August 7 (SMM)

8:00am +Mary Polvere (Mariann Lane)

Saturday, August 8 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Richard Wagner (Mary Ann Wagner)
+Igor Dubravec (Uta Dubravec)

Sunday, August 9

7:30 am (SH) +Marilyn Pfeiffer, Zeb Pfeiffer, & Cecelia Monk (The Family)

9:00 am (SJ) +Deceased Members of the Stevenson and Daly Families (Larry/Birdie Stevenson)

10:30 am (SMM) For All the Parish Family

Looking Ahead

Sunday, August 2—K of C Ladies Aux. Ice Cream Social 2-4pm at St. James

Sunday, August 9—SH Breakfast Canceled

Tuesday, August 11—SH CCW meeting 6:30 pm

Question of the week—

- How can I feed others this week without discriminating, literally or figuratively?

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550

Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com

Home—815-933-4077

Parish Email – smm_sja_sh@yahoo.com

TriParish web page – www.triparishcatholics.org

Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities

Tri Parish Church office –Tanhya Osenga 426-2550

Julie Bisailon 426-2550

Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550 debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education –

St. MM – Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com

Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015

St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 jdstreefarms1@gmail.com

Collections Weekend of July 25-26, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,995

St. James—\$1,265

Sacred Heart— \$1,275

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts

Food That Keeps on Feeding

The miracles of Christ always present challenges for the believer and non-believer alike. Do we take them literally? Do we dwell only on symbolic aspects of the events? In the case of the miracle of multiplication, it can be helpful to "look behind the scenes" at the setting and the circumstances of the miracle.

What we discover is that in this miracle, as in most of them, Jesus is right there, involved, caring and being compassionate. He does not "do" His miracles from a distance, nor does He perform them to attract attention. Rather, Jesus is compassionate, He is present and, by performing the miracle, He is willing to risk. In so doing, Jesus demonstrates characteristics that are helpful for us to have in our lives as Christians. He feeds us spiritually even as he feeds physically those who were hungry then. By accepting Christ, this food that keeps on feeding, we are able to minister more effectively in His Name.



Time to Sign Up for Adult Ed Classes

Our adult ed classes will resume in September, the topic will be The Gospel of St. Mark. If you would like to attend these classes, please call the office (815-426-2550) and register so we can

order the books. The start date will be Wednesday September 9th.

Reflection—

No society can live in peace with itself, or with the world, without a full awareness of the worth and dignity of every human person and the sacredness of all human life. When we accept violence in any form as commonplace, our sensitivities become dulled. When we accept violence, war itself can be taken for granted.

The Bishop's Peace Pastoral



Please pray for the repose of the soul of

+Francis Ahern

Husband of Rose Ahern

May he and all the faithful departed rest in eternal peace.

Our sincere sympathy to Rose and his family and friends.

Parish News:

All Parishes—

- ⇒ Tuesday morning masses will be at St. James until further notice.
- ⇒ Tri Parish Prayer Group will meet each Monday at 7 pm at St James church
- ⇒ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.

St. Margaret Mary-

St. James-

- ⇒ Would you like to help make rosaries to donate to missionaries in the United States? There are no deadlines or minimum commitments, and the CCW provides all of the materials. If you like crafting, or just need to keep your hands busy, this could be something you would like. If interested, please contact Beth Brosseau at 815.671.2286 or jeffandbeth1975@aol.com.



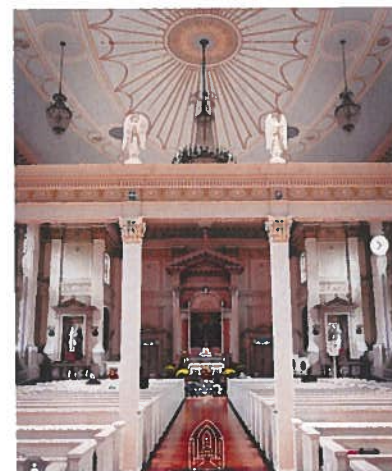
⇒ Sacred Heart—

- ⇒ Important Notice— Beginning on Sunday, July 26 until further notice, Sunday Mass at Sacred Heart will be held in the church hall. Weekday masses on Tuesday will be held at St. James.
- ⇒ Sacred Heart CCW's next meeting is August 11 at 6:30pm in the hall. Tina, Terri, Brenda and Shirley St. Germaine are on for snacks



A Tri-Parish outing is in the works! A bus trip to Mundelein Seminary is being planned for a Saturday late September/early October. It will be a day of touring the campus, the chapels on the grounds, learning about the history of Mundelein Seminary and of course a delicious lunch.

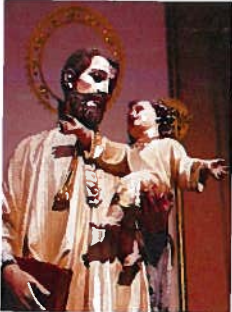
If you are interested, please call the church office as soon as you can commit so we will know what bus to get. The exact date and time will be announced in next week's bulletin, but if you call the office, that information may be available early this week.



Join us as we tour this beautiful campus!



Obscure saint of the week: St. Cajetan (August 7) was the second son of pious and noble parents, Caspar de Thienna and Maria Porta, who dedicated him as an infant to the Blessed Virgin Mary. From childhood he was known as "the Saint" and in later years as "the hunter of souls." A distinguished student, he studied law in Padua, Italy, and was offered positions in the government, but he turned them down and left his native town to seek a religious vocation and obscurity in Rome. Found out, he was forced at age 28 to accept a position at the court of Pope Julius II. He was ordained a priest at age 36.



On the death of Pope Julius, Cajetan returned to Vicenza and disgusted his relatives by joining the *Confraternity of Saint Jerome*, whose members normally were drawn from the lowest and poorest classes. Cajetan spent his fortune in building hospitals and devoted himself to nursing the plague-stricken. He founded a bank to help the poor and offer an alternative to loan sharks; it later became the Bank of Naples. He was known for a gentle game he played with parishioners in which he would bet prayers, rosaries or devotional candles on whether he would perform some service for them; he always did, and they always had to "pay" by saying the prayers.

To renew the lives of the clergy, on May 3, 1524, in Rome, with the help of three others, including the future Pope Paul IV, he formed the *Congregation of Clerks Regular*, known as the *Theatines*. They devoted themselves to preaching, the administration of the Sacraments, and the careful performance of the Church's rites and ceremonies. Saint Cajetan was the first to introduce the *Forty Hours' Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament* as an antidote to the heresy of Calvinism. When the Germans, under the Constable Bourbon, sacked Rome, Saint Cajetan was scourged to extort money from him; what his attackers did not understand was that he had long before spent his worldly wealth on good works.

Cajetan had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. His piety was rewarded one Christmas eve when she appeared to him and placed the Infant Jesus in his arms. When Saint Cajetan was on his deathbed, resigned to the will of God, she appeared to him again, this time surrounded by ministering angels. He said, "Lady, bless me!" Mary replied, "Cajetan, receive the blessing of my Son, and know that I am here as a reward for the sincerity of your love, and to lead you to Paradise." She then told him to have patience with the illness that had attacked him and gave orders to the choirs of angels to escort his soul to heaven. "Cajetan," she said, "my Son calls you. Let us go in peace." And so, he did.

Other obscure saint of the week: St. Albert of Sicily (August 7) Albert's parents, Benedict and Joan, promised that if they were blessed with a son, he would be dedicated to *Our Lady of Mount Carmel*. Albert was educated in a Carmelite monastery and joined the Order at age 18. He was ordained a priest and became a teacher in the monastery. In addition, he was a mendicant preacher to the Sicilians, making many conversions; especially devoted to, and successful with, Sicilian Jews. He was known as a miracle worker. Albert was elected the Sicilian Carmelite provincial in 1257 and worked both as preacher and administrator.



In 1301, the city of Messina, Italy was under siege and a blockade by Duke Robert of Calabria, Italy. Disease ridden and facing imminent starvation, the Messina city fathers asked Albert and the monastery for intervention. Albert celebrated Mass, offering it as a plea for God's deliverance. As he finished, three ships loaded with grain ran the blockade. The city was saved from starvation, and Robert lifted the siege. Albert was so well remembered for this intervention that a city gate was dedicated in his honor over 300 years later.

In his later years, Albert retired to a small monastery near Messina, and spent his time in prayer, meditation, and communion.

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English When Jesus got the news, he slipped away by boat to an out-of-the-way place by himself. But unsuccessfully—someone saw him and the word got around. Soon a lot of people from the nearby villages walked around the lake to where he was. When he saw them coming, he was overcome with pity and healed their sick.

Toward evening the disciples approached him. "We're out in the country and it's getting late. Dismiss the people so they can go to the villages and get some supper."

But Jesus said, "There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper."

"All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish," they said.

Jesus said, "Bring them here." Then he had the people sit on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples. The disciples then gave the food to the congregation. They all ate their fill. They gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. About five thousand were fed (*from Matthew 14*).

Who was the Vatican Pimpernel? The priest who outsmarted the Nazis.

Working from within Vatican City, he organized a vast underground rescue network that hid people in monasteries, convents, private homes, and even Vatican properties. Imagine standing just inside the Vatican while Nazi soldiers wait outside with orders to kill you.

That was the reality for **Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty**, an Irish priest whose courage during World War II earned him the nickname "**The Vatican Pimpernel**."

When Germany occupied Rome in 1943, thousands of Allied prisoners of war, Jews, and political refugees suddenly found themselves trapped. Many had nowhere to go.

Fr. O'Flaherty decided they would not face that danger alone.

Working from within Vatican City, he organized a vast underground rescue network that hid people in monasteries, convents, private homes, and even Vatican properties. Priests, religious sisters, diplomats, and ordinary Roman families all became part of what was later known as the **Rome Escape Line**. By the time Rome was liberated in June 1944, the network had helped save more than **6,500 people**.

The work was incredibly dangerous.

The Gestapo commander in Rome, **Herbert Kappler**, knew exactly who was responsible. Because German troops could not enter Vatican territory, Kappler had a white line painted along the Vatican border and reportedly ordered that O'Flaherty be shot if he crossed it. Yet the priest regularly slipped beyond that line in disguise—sometimes dressed as a laborer, a postman, or other ordinary citizens—to coordinate food, shelter, false papers, and escape routes.

The story becomes even more remarkable after the war.

Kappler was convicted as a war criminal and imprisoned. Rather than harbor bitterness, Fr. O'Flaherty visited him faithfully in prison for years. Eventually, the former Gestapo commander asked to become a Catholic, and it was the very priest he had once tried to kill who instructed him in the faith and received him into the Church.

It is an extraordinary reminder that Christian courage is always joined to Christian mercy.

Fr. Hugh O'Flaherty risked his life to save strangers. Then he extended forgiveness to one of his greatest enemies.

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This simple but powerful prayer was shared with me by a St. James parishioner today. It was on the Hallow app earlier this month. A perfect prayer to recite throughout your day. Thanks, Beth!

Come, Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit

Fill the hearts of your faithful and

Enkindle in us the fire of your love.

-Sr. Grace Dominic

"No kidding! When I woke up this morning, the first thing I said was: 'This is the day I start working on my spiritual values'"

Questions Catholics Ask

-What is natural law?



Natural law remains a fundamental principle in Catholic moral teaching today.

Natural law is the principle that there are higher truths than those dictated by societies and their institutions. It claims these truths are embedded in the natural order of creation. This tradition originated in the Roman Republic with thinkers like Cicero, who reacted against Aristotle's fierce support for the state centuries earlier. Aristotle had held that society was justified in subjecting women, slaves, and barbarians since they were incapable of moral judgment. Proponents of natural law held that all humans were moral beings; therefore institutions of subjugation were unjust. It was a radical proposition to take back then!

Natural law adherents admitted that government, while "unnatural," was a necessary force in society to ensure the protection of the weak from oppression by the strong. Church fathers like Augustine would embrace natural law to express just war theory: that while killing was a moral evil, in certain circumstances it was a necessary action to protect the weak.

For many centuries, natural law was wielded by reformers as much as by conservative factions. In the Middle Ages, however, thinkers began applying these ideas to questions of personal morality as well as to social institutions. Sexual and medical choices were scrutinized according to their biological fittingness. Aquinas was less likely to consider natural law in terms of social systems as Augustine used it.

By the time of the Enlightenment, natural law had bifurcated. Philosophers based the doctrine of universal human rights on its principles and urged political reforms that would incorporate this ideal. Catholic thinkers utilized natural law almost exclusively in terms of personal morality. The Catholic position contrasted the natural design of creation with "the unnatural" — against God's directive and therefore beyond argument.

Natural law remains a fundamental principle in Catholic moral teaching today. At its best, it admits the existence of universally binding moral principles that all humanity might embrace by reason alone. Yet many modern theologians are uncomfortable with a complete capitulation to a law that admits no conversation with Scripture or expanding church tradition. What's in and what's outside the immutable boundaries of natural law continue to be hotly debated.

Scriptures: Genesis chapter 1; Exodus 20:1-17; Psalms 8, 19, 104, 119; Proverbs 1:20—2:22; 9:1-12; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 5:3-12, 17-20; John 1:1-5, 14; 3:31-36; 14:15-27; Hebrews 8:7-12; 10:16

Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary

Ice Cream Social

Sunday, August 2, 2026

2:00pm—4:00pm



Ice Cream Sundaes

Cookies

Raffle

Bingo

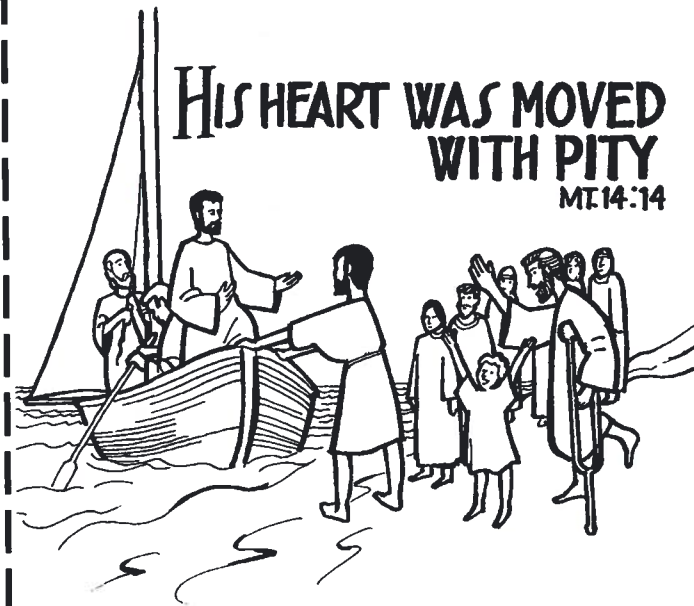
Basket

50/50 Raffle

Free Will Donation

St. James Church Hall (In Irwin)

4372 Main St, Kankakee, IL



Reflection— The Final Exam

As a former teacher, I can tell you that if you want to see brotherhood in action, if you want to see sharing, helpfulness, cooperation and togetherness, just watch a bunch of high school kids taking a final examination. That is the time when there is no question of race, creed or color. There is only one question! "Who's got the answer?"

August 2, 2026

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 55:1-3 | Rom 8:35, 37-39 | Mt 14:13-21

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

In one of the best homilies I ever heard on today's Gospel, the homilist pointed out that the Lord had seemingly "over-multiplied" the loaves and fish. The crowds had eaten to the point of satisfaction, and yet there were twelve baskets of leftovers remaining. "Why so many leftovers? Did the Lord not know how to count?" He asked jokingly, of course. But the point the homilist went on to share that day was that with God, there is always abundance. God doesn't simply provide the bare minimum of what we need for *survival*; the Scriptures tell us that he provides "rich fare" that will "satisfy the desire of every living thing." As we reflect on today's readings, let us not question the Lord's ways, but trust in the abundant generosity of God that satisfies all our needs.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Moments in which God provides for our every need strengthen our faith in him. Yet when difficulties come, we know that God never abandons us. Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans speaks about the unshakable confidence Paul has in God's love for us, despite the difficulties (including shipwreck, beatings, and imprisonment) he endured: "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?" "No," he says. Nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." Take stock of times in your life when God's providence has carried you through difficult times. Consider ways you can share these moments with others as part of your testimony. When our faith rests on a deep awareness of God's faithful love in our lives, we will be able to bear a compelling witness of his goodness to others.

ACCOMPANIMENT

In the Gospel, God shows his loving care by providing for the needs of his people in practical ways. Consider one way you might be able to accompany others going through periods of challenge or trial by providing practical help. This might look like preparing a meal for a new mom in the throes of postpartum, helping with yardwork for a fellow parishioner recovering from surgery, or helping gather classroom supplies for a teacher serving in an impoverished district. In these simple yet concrete ways, we manifest the abundance of God's care and concern for each and every person.



SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 4:4b

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

One does not live on bread alone,
but on every word that comes forth from the
mouth of God.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Matt 14:13-21; L112A

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.

Reflecting on the Gospel

No one really knows the precise number of hungry people in our world, but the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates it to be 925 million—that's approximately one of every seven people.

Hunger was no stranger in the days of Isaiah and of Jesus as well. In the first reading, Isaiah voices the dream of the returning exiles. With their pitiful resources, they long for all to be able to eat well, without having to pay a cent. No one would die of thirst or malnutrition. In the gospel, Jesus enacts God's promise to fill the hungry with good food, as he feeds a crowd of thousands. This is not only an act of heartfelt compassion, but it is also a politically subversive action. In Jesus's day, as now, food is about power. The rich who had control of land and the means of food production and distribution, who comprised about 2-3 percent of the people, were the ones who ate well and plentifully. The rest struggled daily to feed themselves and their children. Taxes, pestilence, and drought often ate up their reserves and left them on the brink of starvation.

In today's world, there is easily enough food for everyone, and then some. But not all have enough land to grow food or sufficient income to purchase it. In the gospel, Jesus's disciples presume that there is enough food for everyone, but they figure it is someone else's responsibility to provide it. They want to send everyone off to buy their own food, thinking that everyone has money and that the surrounding villages have the resources to feed the multitude. Jesus directs them away from an impulse toward self-sufficiency to a solution that depends on remaining in community and pooling and redistributing their resources. In a eucharistic action, he transforms all that they have, and there is enough.

At the end of the episode, Matthew's notice that the count of five thousand did not include the women and children is a reminder that children and their mothers are the ones who are hardest hit by hunger. Even when women make sure their husbands and children are fed before they themselves eat, some five million children die every year because of undernutrition. The gospel today invites us to resist the temptation to consider it someone else's responsibility to address the problem of world hunger. When we gather at Eucharist, we not only give thanks for God's gifts received freely and abundantly, but together we seek to understand the causes of hunger and redouble our efforts to galvanize the church's energies toward aiding peoples and nations to take the drastic measures needed.

The opening verses of today's gospel remind us that such actions provoke opposition from those who benefit from the unequal distribution. On the heels of the execution of John, Jesus fed the crowds, knowing he could be the next victim of Rome. Was it because he was counting the women and children who would otherwise perish?

