



Daily Reflections

December 6, 2017

Scripture

Matthew 15: 29-37

At that time:

Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee,
went up on the mountain, and sat down there.

Great crowds came to him,
having with them the lame, the blind, the deformed, the mute,
and many others.

They placed them at his feet, and he cured them.

The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking,
the deformed made whole,
the lame walking,
and the blind able to see,
and they glorified the God of Israel.

Jesus summoned his disciples and said,
"My heart is moved with pity for the crowd,
for they have been with me now for three days
and have nothing to eat.

I do not want to send them away hungry,
for fear they may collapse on the way."

The disciples said to him,

"Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place
to satisfy such a crowd?"

Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

"Seven," they replied, "and a few fish."

He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground.

Then he took the seven loaves and the fish,

gave thanks, broke the loaves,

and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.

They all ate and were satisfied.

They picked up the fragments left over—seven baskets full.

Our Scripture Reflection

Matthew tells us that Jesus' heart was moved with "eleos", mercy. This does not mean that He simply felt sorry for the devoted crowd. Jesus was moved to act on their behalf, and He did so in a magnanimous way.

Food for your Journey

Hilary, bishop of Poitiers during the mid-fourth century, said that Jesus was fully aware of the significance of feeding the crowd. In fact, it was no coincidence that there were five loaves: up to then the people had depended on the five books of the Law; the two fish were reminders of the preaching of the prophets and of John to restore hope to human life by virtue of water (baptism); and 5,000 heard the message of two fishermen in Acts 4. And naturally, the 12 baskets were the baskets of each of the disciples -- and as Chrysostom would remind us, Judas, too, bore one, for he wanted all disciples to know his power. Jesus knew the significance: he was to become their bread and their hope.

--Rev. Gary D. Cecil

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You never just felt sorry for people in need. You always acted on their behalf. Fill my heart with mercy so that I may assist those who are in need. Amen.