

# Bread for the Hungry

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle B | July 28, 2024

## WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

For a long time, I refused to believe that such thing as a God or Higher Power existed. I would see all the hate and tragedies in the news on TV that happened in the world on a daily basis and I would ask myself, "How can a loving Father/God allow such things to happen?"

After I made the best decision of my life, I met Father Mike, the rest of the JRJI members and Scott. It was then that I began questioning myself, "Could I be wrong about God? Why do all these people that don't even know me have faith in me? Why do they care about me?" The only answer I could come up with was, "It has to be God's love."

I was able to see God's love through them, who work so hard unselfishly and dedicate so much part of your life into helping those that to a lot of people society and righteously so consider "trash, animals, or evil" because of the crimes we've committed. That's exactly what we are. But we weren't born like this; we turned into or became "trash, animals, or evil" due to events, lack of love, understanding, and attention, or in some cases abuse that we experience in our childhood. By no means is it a justification to our crimes, but it's a reality that can't be ignored. We're not lost cases that can't be helped like a lot of people think or tell themselves to wash their hands off us. We're all grown men, but in a lot of ways we still need love, reassurance that people care and believe in us. You'd be amazed what a little dose of love could do to a human being.

**-Erik, who is in a California State Prison.**



"Loaves and Fishes" by John Swanson

## PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

God our Father,  
You give your children everywhere all the good gifts for a fully human life. Let your Son give us the bread of his word that nourishes our faith, of his peace that brings us rest, of his consolation that gives us hope and joy, and the nourishing bread that sustains us on the way to you.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



# LITURGY OF THE WORD

## First Reading: 2 Kings 4:42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah bringing to Elisha, the man of God, twenty barley loaves made from the firstfruits, and fresh grain in the ear. Elisha said, "Give it to the people to eat." But his servant objected, "How can I set this before a hundred people?" Elisha insisted, "Give it to the people to eat." "For thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and there shall be some left over.'" And when they had eaten, there was some left over, as the LORD had said.

The Word of the Lord.  
**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145: 10-11, 15-16, 17-18

**R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD,  
and let your faithful ones bless you.  
Let them discourse of the glory of your  
kingdom  
and speak of your might.

**R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

The eyes of all look hopefully to you,  
and you give them their food in due season;  
you open your hand  
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

The LORD is just in all his ways  
and holy in all his works.  
The LORD is near to all who call upon him,  
to all who call upon him in truth.

**R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

## Second Reading: Ephesians 4: 1-6

Brothers and sisters: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The Word of the Lord.  
**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel: John 6: 1-15

Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd followed him, because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. The Jewish feast of Passover was near. When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?" He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people recline." Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted. When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted." So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than they could eat. When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world." Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain alone.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



## MEDITATION: BREAD OF LIFE

david was sitting  
in the shade  
for three days  
he and his friends  
had been here  
listening to jesus  
what had brought him

some had only  
stayed briefly  
because of the heat  
the sleeping conditions  
the lack of food

david was glad  
he had packed  
enough food  
for his group

last night  
around the fire  
david and his friends  
spoke about what  
jesus had preached  
and about how  
it moved them

jesus had something  
different to say  
it seemed as if  
david had waited  
all his life  
to meet Jesus

today it was hot  
and the storm clouds  
gathered

david's two friends  
had been locked up  
by the romans

for six years  
the storm  
fascinated them  
after not feeling  
the rain for so long  
it was refreshing

to be soaked by it  
later they spoke  
about what they  
had experienced

While being  
locked up  
for two hours  
david did not  
say a word  
he listened to stories  
about the conditions  
they had lived in

they lived like  
caged animals

passion stirred  
in their conversation  
and even after  
the dark clouds  
showered rain  
and put out the fire  
they continued  
speaking about  
their country  
about its injustices  
the empire was cruel

that was when  
jesus joined them  
at first the group

was intimidated  
but they quickly  
continued their  
conversation  
and jesus listened

the anger flowed  
strongly around the  
dark clouds of  
this empire

the suffering  
it caused  
the unjust wars  
the loss of human life

as we spoke  
of how powerless  
we had felt  
during these years  
those in the group  
grew to easily  
understand why  
some of their friends  
had joined the zealots  
but Jesus had a  
different message  
about what power is

jesus  
that is why we are  
drawn to you  
you are different  
from the other  
religious leaders  
you give us hope  
when it feels like

there is none  
you feel what we feel  
when you speak

you bring god  
into our reality  
and we feel as if god  
is part of our struggles  
and part of our lives  
none of our leaders  
speak out  
against the cruelty  
the brutality of  
the romans

you speak of bread  
of the hunger and  
starvation of  
so many across  
the country while  
others in the city  
dine so lavishly  
and have more than  
enough food

jesus said  
i am the bread  
many of those  
who are well-fed are  
actually starving  
because the bread  
they eat is not  
truly life-giving  
i offer this bread to you  
so that you may eat it  
and give it to others  
so that they can  
have life



**REFLECTION:** I remember a time I was ready for change in my life.... I remember... I remember...

### OUR FATHER

Let us pray with confidence to the Father  
in the words our Savior gave us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against  
us, and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**R. For the kingdom, the power and the  
glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### SIGN OF PEACE

Jesus, you said to your apostles: "I leave you  
peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our  
sins, but on the faith of your Church, and  
grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom  
where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**R. And with your spirit.**

### LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to  
his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter  
under my roof, but only say the word and  
my soul shall be healed.**

### COMMUNION

### CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord,  
Even amidst all the injustice of the world, you feed  
us with the bread of life. Help us to share that  
bread with others so we might realize your  
kingdom even in a world as unjust ours.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**

