

Saturday's Gospel: Jesus' Concern for Each Person

Gospel for Saturday in the 5th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mk* 8:1-10)

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him, and said to them, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the

way; and some of them have come a long way.”

And his disciples answered him, “How can one feed these men with bread here in the desert?” And he asked them, “How many loaves have you?” They said, “Seven.”

And he commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish; and having blessed them, he commanded that these also should be set before them. And they ate, and were satisfied; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away; and immediately he got into the boat with his disciples, and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

Commentary

What must the strength of Jesus' words have been, the goodness he radiated and the hope he instilled that drew the crowds to readily to him! They followed him so eagerly, often coming from distant places, that they even forgot their need for provisions. These people teach us to show our desire to get to know our Lord better through our deeds. Perhaps they still didn't understand fully the supernatural meaning of Christ's words, but they were ready to make the sacrifices needed for what they saw as worthwhile.

Jesus feels sincere compassion for them. Thus he shows his concern for each person in his or her specific situation. He has given them the spiritual food of his teachings, and now he also wants to give them the

material food they need. We, who want to be apostles of our Lord, can learn from this scene to be concerned about each person in his or her uniqueness. The love God shows us leads us to have a true concern for the spiritual and physical health of others. Divine love is manifested also in the most material details of daily life.

“And they ate, and were satisfied; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full.” The miracle our Lord works is marked by abundance. Those who have gone in search of Him (and we with them) receive ample confirmation that Jesus does not abandon those who risk their lives on Him.

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