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Friday's Gospel: Giving Everything

Gospel for Friday in the 2nd
Week of Easter, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Jn 6:1-15*)

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a multitude followed him, because they saw the signs which he did on those who were diseased. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to him, Jesus

said to Philip, "How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what are they among so many?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five

barley loaves, left by those who had eaten.

When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!” Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

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Commentary

After another intense day of preaching and healing, Jesus feels compassion for the crowd because they will have to return home with an empty stomach. So he asks the apostles to find food for them.

Our Lord’s request would perhaps not have been received very well by the disciples, since they too were

exhausted and were looking forward to being alone with the Master and retiring to a quiet place to rest with Him.

Jesus was perfectly aware of how difficult the request was that he was asking of them. Our Lord also asks us for things that often seem impossible: a commandment we cannot live, a difficult relationship, a friend we find ourselves losing touch with, a virtue we have been fighting to attain without much success. But what our Lord really wants from the apostles with this request is that they learn to trust in Him, and not in what they themselves have or think they can achieve.

After doing what they can on their part, the results are very meager. What are five loaves and two fish for such a large crowd of people? Nothing, or almost nothing. But that “almost nothing” is what makes the

great miracle that our Lord performs possible.

Jesus, with the “almost nothing” of the apostles, provides food for everyone, with twelve baskets filled with what is left over. Jesus is never miserly. He gives everything, he gives himself completely. And he does so that we may have life, and have it in abundance (cf. *Jn* 10:10).

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