

“We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.”

(Matthew 14. 17)

God will multiply what you give into his hands!

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THE WORD OF GOD: MATTHEW 14. 13-21

“We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” (Matthew 14.17) Each one of us is created and called by God in a very particular and very personal way. As the Lord says to the prophet Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1.5) and again, “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.” (Jeremiah 29.11-12)

God has a beautiful plan for each one of us; a marvellous project and until we do not discover this project, this plan of God, we are unhappy, unsatisfied and restless as Saint Augustine was lamenting: “Too late have I loved you O God, O God old and new.” But after having discovered his call and vocation Augustine became another person, a new man, passionate and in love with God.

In the gospel of today we see a situation where there is a crowd of hungry people and they are in a deserted place and Jesus tells the disciples to “give them something to eat.” The disciples said: “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” Not much really, to feed so many hungry people.

In fact, each of us could say something similar: “Who am I? I am nothing. I have nothing. I have only five barley loaves and two fish. What can I do? The problems of the world are too big for me. Too many bad things, evil things are happening..... drugs, alcohol, sexual abuse, social inequality, injustice, hatred, revenge, sickness, loneliness, terrorism, war, famine, and the list goes on! No! It’s all too much for me. What can I do?”

It is true we cannot do anything until we have entrusted ourselves and all that we have to God, to the Lord. We have to hand over the five barley loaves and the two fish to the Lord. But when we entrust all to Him even the little that we have, God can do great and marvellous things in our lives. With two fish and five barley loaves Jesus fed and satisfied about 5000.

Let us see another biblical example, that of Mary of Nazareth, a Hebrew girl. God sent angel Gabriel to her to announce to her the birth of the Messiah. Mary said to the angel: “How can this be, since I have no husband?” (Luke 1.34)

The angel said to her: “With God nothing will be impossible.” (Luke 1.37)

And Mary said: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be to me according to your word.” (Luke 1. 38)

When we look at ourselves, we are nothing, often full of contradictions, limitations, weaknesses. But let us remember the words of Paul: “When I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12. 10)

And writing to the Romans he says: “We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8.28)

It is said that it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness!

When Mother Teresa of Calcutta left her convent about 70 years ago, she did not even have 50 cents in her pocket. But today, in every continent of the world, hundreds of Missionaries of charity serve the poor, the sick, the old. They never lack money. *Five barley loaves and two fish!* The miracle is repeated today.

Each one of us has something to contribute, something to construct, for the others, whether in small things, or in big things.

We must discover *the five barley loaves and two fish* which we have within us – a desire, a wish, a dream to be someone, to do something to make this world a better place. *Life can be an unforgettable experience if we are able to hand over to the Lord the little that we have.* And he can transform that little for the good of others in ways that we cannot even comprehend.

I read the following thought on a notice board in a Parish church. I was touched by the words. They can also make you reflect and think. I wish to conclude these few words of mine with this thought I found in a church bulletin a few years ago: *The light on your path – to follow Christ is an adventure, a risk....But life has meaning only if you live for Someone.*

That ‘Someone’ is God – Jesus Christ! Will you trust him and hand over to him your *five loaves and two fish*? Whatever that is, if you give it to him, he can and will multiply it for you!

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