

July 28, 2024

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



AWAKEN

Becoming Disciples of the Word

Sunday's

READINGS

2 Kings 4:42–44
Ephesians 4:1–6
John 6:1–15

Scan the code to read today's readings. ➔



Opening PRAYER

Jesus, you told us that you are the Bread of Life. Help us to believe that you alone can satisfy our hunger. Amen.



Thoughts for REFLECTION

Why do you think Paul used the phrase “bearing one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2)?

What do you believe is necessary in your own faith life for you to live in peace?

Awaken is written and edited by Jo Ann Paradise, D.Min.



What You NEED to KNOW

Scripture Background

2 Kings 4:42–44

You may have been shocked by this reading from 2 Kings. Perhaps you assumed that Jesus was the only one who could multiply food! This passage helps us to see the intentional and profound work of God throughout centuries of salvation history. The two Books of Kings cover Israel's history from 961 B.C. to 561 B.C. They focus on the roles of the kings in participating in the collapse of Israel and Judah. Elisha was a man chosen by God to relay God's words to the Israelites. He first served the prophet Elijah. After Elijah's return to the heavens, Elisha became known as “the man of God.” In today's reading we witness Elisha's ability to allow God's power to flow through him. The people are hungry. They are miraculously fed. God makes real his desire to give humanity what it truly hungers for—a relationship with him.

Ephesians 4:1–6

As we reflect on Saint Paul's letter, we begin with the creed (statements of faith) that Paul presents about the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the source of our unity and our hope. Being united to Christ's Death and Resurrection in Baptism, we live in relationship with him as disciples. That relationship leads us to the

Father who is “over all and through all and in all” (v. 6). Therefore, as disciples we must live with humility, gentleness, and patience. This, however, may be the most challenging call, to bear with one another through love. Paul believes that this is possible for us because we are one in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 6:1–15

Today we read from John's Gospel. We are present at the Miracles of the Loaves and Fish, sometimes referred to as the Multiplication of the Loaves. This Gospel account is filled with images and symbolism. An enormous number of men are gathered. Remember that this number may be symbolic rather than historical. The time of Passover is near. Jesus identifies the people's hunger. Like Elisha, Jesus provides what they need. Just as with the bread that fell from the heavens in the desert, and Elisha's food, the people had enough to eat and leftovers to spare. What Jesus offers us as food is everlasting life. Chapter 6 of John is called the Eucharistic Discourse. Jesus declares himself the Bread of Life. When we receive the Eucharist, each of us is given Christ himself. He is our manna in the desert.





Points to Ponder

Bear with One Another

When we hear Saint Paul say, “bearing with one another through love” (Ephesians 4:2), we may think that is not a very high bar. We often use *bearing* as a synonym for “putting up with.” That is not Jesus’ understanding. Bearing with one another can only happen through the love of God. I can’t bear to see you hungry. I can’t bear to see you set apart. I can’t bear to see you enduring violence. This is the disposition of a disciple. When we act with humility, patience, and gentleness in our personal relationships, not only do we experience peace, but those in our field of influence experience it as well. Our words and actions are our response to our relationship with the Trinity. We cannot surrender the power of our choice to a reaction we have to someone else’s words and actions.

- How important is the pause between someone’s words or actions and our response?
- How do you intentionally give yourself that pause?



The Eucharist is the secret of my day. It gives strength and meaning to all my activities of service to the Church and to the whole world.

—Pope Saint John Paul II

Strengthen belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Visit the Pflaum Eucharist resources page.



and CHURCH TEACHING

Connecting GOSPEL

Bias and Prejudice

One of the most sinister yet subtle ways that evil works in our lives is in our learned biases and prejudices. Discipleship does not simply encourage that we examine these dangers to our spiritual lives it demands it. In the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* this demand is clearly stated: “Attitudes of prejudice and bias against an individual, for any reason, as well as actions or judgments based on prejudiced or biased views, violate God’s will and law. [This is based on] ... the principle that everyone should

look at another person as another self” (p. 326). If you have said, “I am not a biased person,” or “I am in no way prejudiced,” pay attention. Humility requires that we admit that everyone has been formed by history, culture, family, and experience. Coming to realize how we act out of these flawed perceptions is painful but freeing. When we interact with the understanding that God is “over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:6), we see good and beauty in each human face.

➔ To learn more, refer to CCC, 1822–1829 or go to Booklet 8, Session 4 in *Growing Faith*.



Closing PRAYER

Father God, Creator of all that is good, send wise people into my life to help me see your goodness in myself and in every person you have created. Amen.

FAMILY CORNER

Scan here for parent resources. ➔



Question of the Week

What gifts do you have that Jesus could multiply to help others?



Family Prayer

Jesus, sometimes we are hungry too! We hunger for love, encouragement, or peace. Please help us to turn to you for all the things we hunger for. Amen.