

Homily on Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

There was last year a TV show about good people. The main character is Gary Hopson, who regularly read the daily news through the newspaper of Chicago. While he was reading the news, he often noticed people in distress and unlucky. When he saw any victims, he always wondered what he had to do to help them. And immediately, despite the difficulties, he tried to help the victims in his ability.

The heart of the brave and generous man resembles the heart of Jesus. Whenever Jesus saw the suffering people, he could not hold back his love and show his compassion for them. We remember the Gospel last week. When Jesus saw the crowd, who came to hear his teachings, his heart was moved with pity for them. (Mark 6:34) Today, he is seeing the hungry crowd, He could not let them go. He did not only cure physical illnesses, heal the wounds in their souls, teach them many things, but he also felt responsible for providing them with food. There is no restaurant in the middle of the mountain.

However, if there are restaurants, they would not be enough money to buy bread for thousands of people. So, he multiplied the bread and fish to feed the people. With this great miracle, Jesus reveals to us his heart full of mercy and love and his mighty power. Also, on this occasion, he trained the human heart of his disciple and us. He wants to teach us that we have to be open for the needs of others, to be merciful with our neighbors in distress. And compassion must be transformed into concrete work.

We think that this world is progressing and developing, people will not have hunger and poverty. But it is not. The reality is that today in the world, millions of people die every day from starvation and daily necessities, especially homeless people around the country or the people in Africa and North Korea. People are not just hungry for food, but also hungry for information, ideas, culture, spiritual life and love.

Today, people are facing many other forms of hunger: mental hunger, physical hunger, hunger for love, hunger for happiness; because the kings, the rulers, the governors on the earth seek the riches, the status and the power for themselves, their families and people. Today the Gospel introduces us to Jesus, the God of love who takes care of both our body and soul. He is the One who satisfies our 'hungers'.

In the first reading, Elisha believed in the power of God and he ordered his disciples who have some bread in their baskets to distribute them to the people. And in the Gospel, Jesus multiplied the bread and the fish from five loaves and two fish of a boy. Why did Elisha use some bread of his disciple and Jesus use the boy's bread and fish to make these miracles?

This means, God needs our hands in his work. The Lord needs our collaboration. God just waits. He waits for our generous contribution to his great work. God has always provided a place for us to collaborate in His plan. As in the Gospel, Jesus needed only the small generosity of the boy to create a big miracle.

Dear parents, family life has many difficulties. There are families that have many material things, but children and family members are suffering, hungry and thirsty in their spirit. Many families have plenty of money, but they are not happy, they lack a warm and lovely atmosphere, they are hungry for an intimate meal. There are many children who lack the love and care of their parents. Such hungers can only be filled in families by the parents.

And in our society, young people today are also helpless and hungry for some ways to make their lives useful and meaningful. They are starving examples in the family and in society. They are hungry for education and the guidance of their parents and the adults. They are hungry for a spiritual life to grow up in their faith.

I just express these hungers of the people in our society today. We recognize them. We need to do some things. Begin in ourselves. Begin from our families. Begin with our loved ones. Begin in our parish. Therefore, with our collaboration first, just trust in God, and He will make the miracles in our lives.

And I want to share with you one thing. If you are hungry and thirsty for happiness and peace, come to the church. Kneel before the Eucharist. Jesus in the Sacred Host will satisfy you. The miracle of the multiplication in the Gospel is the epiphany of the Eucharistic miracle today. Jesus makes a miracle every day at Mass. He is waiting for us. Come and see Him. You will be peaceful and happy.