



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 14: 13-21.

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves." He said to them, "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over— twelve wicker baskets full. Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.

Matthew 14:13-21

Introductory Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I believe you want me to have faith in you, faith that hearkens to your words without any second guessing. I hope in your words, not relying solely on my own strength or reasoning. I love you. You continue to astonish me by showing me that your ways are not my ways.

Petition:

Lord Jesus, increase my faith.

1. When Our Efforts Bear Little Fruit:

Our mission is to extend Christ's Kingdom in society. Each one of us must do so according to his or her state in life. At times, however, it may seem that our efforts are not bringing about the desired results. We love Christ so much, and yet so many of our family, friends and acquaintances do not know or love him at all. We love our country and wish that all our fellow countrymen would discover for themselves the beauty of our

Catholic faith. We know that in this faith lie all the answers to the fundamental questions and aspirations of the human heart. We work hard, we brainstorm initiatives, we join with others, we strive to do our best, and yet, it sometimes seems that others are not hearing Christ's message. What is wrong? What more can we do?

2. Feed Them Yourselves:

Our Lord tells the apostles to feed the multitude. How could they possibly feed 5,000 men, not to mention women and children? They had only five loaves and two fish. Surely this was a parable, they thought. They were too focused on how little they could do; they did not see beyond their own weakness. What went through their heads when he told them to sit the people down in groups? What did they say in that moment? We don't know. We do know, however, that they listened to Christ. They did what they were told. They did not go about complaining that it was pointless. And so, in their act of obedience they actually began to feed the people themselves.

3. What Is Impossible for Man Is Possible for God:

Our Lord multiplied the loaves of bread and the fish by his divine power. Interestingly, he fed the people through the Twelve. The apostles, despite their weakness, were the vessels who distributed the multiplied bread and fish to the people. Christ can do great things in us as well, if we let him. In the face of the challenges of the New Evangelization, if we bring our weakness and limitations to Christ and are ready to do as he asks, then we, too, shall bear great fruit.

Conversation with Christ:

Once again, Lord, you show us your goodness and kindness. The apostles turned to you and poured out their hearts. And you answered their prayers, giving them fruits beyond all measure. Lord, I want to pray as they prayed. I want to do what you ask as they did, in faith and love.

Resolution:

I will ask for the grace to serve as Christ's vessel of evangelization, striving not to allow difficulties to cause me to lose heart.