



When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. And when they found him across the sea they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled. Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal." So they said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent." The crowd said to Jesus, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*" So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."

Introductory Prayer: Jesus, I believe that you are present in my life. You know all my thoughts, desires, intentions and deeds. Yet you love me anyway. Thank you for the supreme gift of yourself to us in the Eucharist, where we can truly encounter you: body, blood, soul and divinity. I trust in your love and abandon myself to you.

Petition: Lord, help me not to look for signs, but to rest in your love.

1. What Have You Done for Me Lately? The crowd asks Jesus for a sign, and this is strange. Isn't this the same crowd that he fed the day before with five loaves and two fish (cf. John 6:1-14)? Didn't they say at the time, "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world." (John 6:14)? Didn't Jesus have to escape from them since they wanted to make him king (cf. John 6:15)? Sometimes, I'm the same way. There is an abundance of things that Jesus has done for me. At the moment they happen, I receive them with joy. Perhaps I am grateful, but more often than not, I don't give Jesus enough credit. And even if I do thank him, on the following day (sometimes even sooner), I seem to have forgotten. And I go on asking more favors. Maybe I have the attitude that he never does anything for me. How can I be so dense to not grasp all the signs of love that he shows me every day?

2. The Crowd Is Condemned by the Very Psalm They Quote to Jesus: The crowd quotes Scripture to Jesus, trying to get him to multiply more loaves: "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." (Psalm 78:24) They are looking for their own material benefit and want him to do a miracle that will feed them every day, like the manna in the desert that fed their forefathers for forty years. Yet their own words condemn them. Psalm 78 is about the hard-heartedness of their forefathers in the desert despite the manna and other signs the Lord worked for them: "And they ate and were well filled, for he gave them what they craved.... In spite of all this they still sinned; they did not believe in his wonders" (Psalm 78:29, 32). Doesn't Jesus deal with me at least as well as he did with the Israelites in the wilderness? Hasn't he always been on hand to help me?

3. Jesus Always Gives Us Better Than What We Ask For: They are asking for more ordinary bread. Jesus promises them something better – bread to feed the spirit. He starts by talking about ordinary things and then elevates the conversation to more spiritual things. We are well aware how much we need certain everyday things, like bread. Jesus is trying to help us see we need something to feed us spiritually just as much – if not more. The crowd ate yesterday and was satisfied yesterday. Today, they are hungry again, and come again to Jesus hoping to be given something like manna that will feed them every day, so they won't have to worry about ordinary hunger again. Jesus goes beyond that and speaks to them of a bread that is coming, a bread that will feed them spiritually so that they will never have to hunger spiritually again. He gives them something far better than what they ask for: the bread of his own body.

Conversation with Christ: Dear Jesus, so often I see things only from my own selfish

perspective. I think very materialistically, not glimpsing all that is happening on the supernatural level, especially the supernatural gifts you give me every day. Help me to be more spiritual and less selfish. Help me to trust in your goodness and loving guidance.

Resolution: I will find a way to visit Jesus in the Eucharist today. If it is really impossible, I will make a spiritual communion, asking Jesus to come into my heart even though I cannot receive him in this moment and asking him to increase my faith, hope and love in him.