

July 25, 2021

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

2 Kgs 4:42-44

Eph 4:1-6

Jn 6:1-15

GROW: I once saw Tony Melendez, a musician born without arms, play his guitar for the pope – with his feet – and I knew I had witnessed something exceptional, something extraordinary. We may be feeling the same way about some of the Olympic performances taking place right now. But however amazed Tony Melendez or an Olympic medal performance might make us feel, it is hard to imagine what it must have been like to experience Jesus taking a few barley loaves and fish, blessing them, and somehow feeding more than 5,000 people. How Great Thou Art, indeed! Participating in this miracle was life-changing for those who realized what Jesus had done. They were convinced, on the spot, that Jesus was a prophet, and were ready to carry him away as a king. But Jesus did not come to be an earthly king, he came to give his life for us, that we might have life with him in abundance.

GO: One boy gives up his lunch and Jesus feeds thousands – and there were *twelve wicker baskets with fragments* left over! Think of how God can multiply *our* gifts. Perhaps there are times we fail to share what we have, thinking it is too small to make a difference; thinking that what we bring to feed others can't possibly be worth anything. Sure, what usually happens with us isn't on a scale like today's Gospel passage, and our offering may not be "Olympic" in nature. But in sharing our gifts as Jesus calls us to – to love our neighbor and to do "small things with great love" as St. Teresa of Calcutta is purported to have said – there is no such thing as a gift or talent too small. Ask the Holy Spirit for fortitude as you strive to share your gifts.

ACTION: Perhaps it's time to contact someone who has been on your mind lately. A seemingly small gesture of concern may be just the support they need right now. With the help of the Holy Spirit, perhaps you may be a source of affirmation for them, providing a catalyst that helps them discern their path more clearly.