



“The more holy, the more human”

Mark 6: 30-43

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. By now it was already late and his disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already very late. Dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” He said to them in reply, “Give them some food yourselves.” But they said to him, “Are we to buy two hundred days’ wages worth of food and give it to them to eat?” He asked them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out they said, “Five loaves and two fish.” So he gave orders to have them sit down in groups on the green grass. The people took their places in rows by hundreds and by fifties. Then, taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to [his] disciples to set before the people; he also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied. And they picked up twelve wicker baskets full of fragments and what was left of the fish. Those who ate [of the loaves] were five thousand men.

Pope Francis - Do not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy. On the contrary, you will become what the Father had in mind when he created you, and you will be faithful to your deepest self. To depend on God sets us free from every form of enslavement and leads us to recognize our great dignity. We see this in Saint Josephine Bakhita: “Abducted and sold

into slavery at the tender age of seven, she suffered much at the hands of cruel masters. But she came to understand the profound truth that God, and not man, is the true Master of every human being, of every human life. This experience became a source of great wisdom for this humble daughter of Africa.” Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God’s grace. For in the words of León Bloy, when all is said and done, “the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint.”

(GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE, 32 and 34)

Mother Clelia - Mother Clelia was aware of the presence of God in every person; consequently, she sought to assume an attitude as similar as possible to that of Jesus himself.

“Her never-ending love was directed also towards her neighbor; charity towards the poor, the sick, and children was in her nature. She was sensitive to the needs of others. It was common to say that Mother, in helping the needy, was a “spendthrift.” Needless to say, the source of such a hard-working charity was God Himself.”

“Mother Clelia was aware of the presence of God in every person. This truth was the foundation of her actions: to love everyone, to love the needy, the orphans, the elderly, the sick, and those who suffer in any way, to bow before every human need to the point of forgetting herself. This was her characteristic trait.”

“Jesus wants me to sympathize with the sorrows of all the afflicted and console them with good and gentle words. If I had true charity, I would not be suspicious. God himself forbids me to judge my neighbor harshly so as not to be judged by Him with the same severity with which I allow myself to judge others.”

PLEDGE

- In light of the Gospel, the Church, and Mother Clelia, how can we as a GFASC family apply the journey to holiness to our lives so that we can become more human?
- The smallest acts of thoughtfulness and attention toward others make us more human and more holy. Let us try during the course of each day to make small acts of love toward others. Do you have any testimonies of this to share?

A STORY

Two men, both of whom were very ill, shared a hospital room. One of the men was allowed to sit for one hour each afternoon to enable excess fluids to drain from his body. His bed was near the only window in the room. The other man was completely bedridden. After two days together, the two men got to know each other and began to speak for hours on end. They spoke of their wives, their families, their homes, their work, their military service, and their travels. Every afternoon the man in the bed near the window was able to sit and would pass the time telling his companion everything he could see. The other patient began to live for those hours, during which his suffering was eased by the stories of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a delightful lake where ducks and swans played in the water, while children navigated their toy boats. Young people in love walked hand in hand through flowers of all kinds and there was a beautiful view of the city in the distance.

While the man near the window described everything in the finest detail, the other man would close his eyes and imagine the scene. On one hot afternoon, the man near the window described a parade that was passing by. Although the other man could not see the band, he was able to hear it and see it in his mind's eye, just as the man at the window described it to him. The days and weeks passed.

One morning the nurse on duty came in and found the lifeless body of the man near the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. The nurse was very saddened and called the attendants to remove the body. The other man, as soon as he felt it was appropriate, asked if he could move to the bed near the window. The nurse was very happy to make the change, and once she was sure that he was settled, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, the man lifted himself up on his elbow to look for the first time at the outside world, slowly turning to look outside.

He looked out onto a white wall.

The man then asked the nurse what could have prompted his deceased friend to describe such wonderful things outside that window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and was not even able to see the wall. "Maybe he wanted to give you courage."

There is great joy in making someone else happy, despite our situation. Sorrow that is shared is cut in half, but joy that is shared is doubled! If you want to feel rich, count the things you have that money can't buy. Today is a gift—that is why it is called the "present."

PRAYER

Lord, do you want my hands to spend this day helping the poor and sick in need? Lord, today I give you my hands.

Lord, do you want my feet to spend this day visiting those who need a friend? Lord, today I give you my feet.

Lord, do you want my voice to spend this day speaking with those who need a word of love? Lord, today I give you my voice.

Lord, do you want my heart to spend this day loving someone only because he is someone? Lord, today I give you my heart.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust and hope in You!

