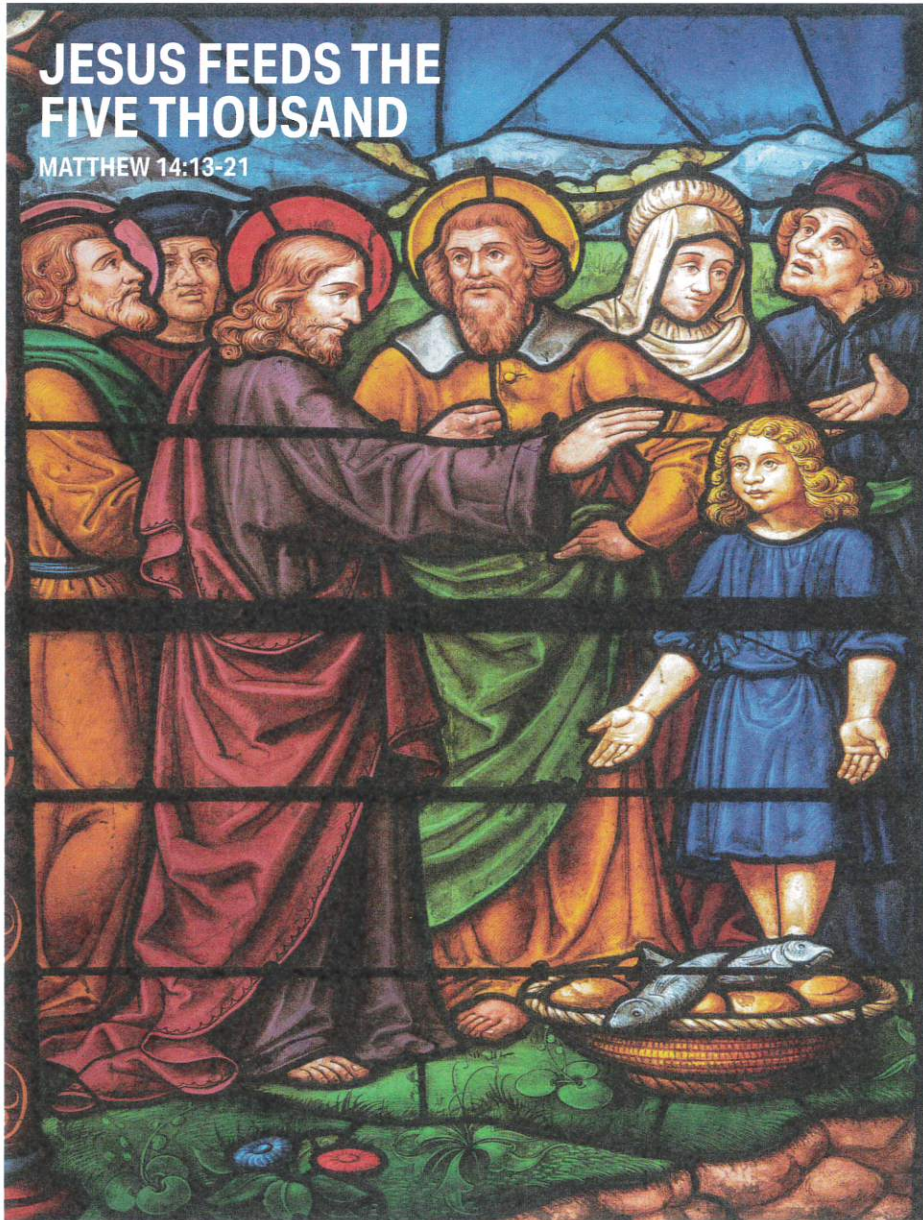


Sunday Message

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 2 August 2026 • Psalter Week 2



JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND

MATTHEW 14:13-21

In this passage, we witness Jesus' compassion in action. Upon hearing of John the Baptist's death, he withdraws to a quiet place, yet the crowds follow him. Seeing their need, "he had compassion on them and healed their sick". Jesus' concern is both spiritual and physical – he attends to their suffering, showing that God's care embraces every aspect of human life.

The miracle of the feeding highlights the abundance of God's providence. With only five loaves and two fish, Jesus blesses the small offering, distributes it to the crowd, and everyone eats their fill. The leftover fragments emphasise that God's generosity is overflowing and cannot be exhausted. The disciples' participation in distributing the food demonstrates the partnership between divine action and human response.

Matthew presents this event as a sign of the kingdom: God provides for his people, satisfies their needs, and invites cooperation in his work. It also prefigures the Eucharist, where Christ gives himself as spiritual nourishment. The passage calls readers to trust in God's providence, offer what they have, and participate actively in sharing his love and care with others. ■

REFLECT

Jesus heals the sick and cares for them, showing that discipleship begins with attentiveness to the suffering around us. Faith is not only belief but action: seeing the needs of others and responding with love.

The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand reminds us that God can transform even our smallest efforts into abundance. The disciples' simple offering of five loaves and two fish, given to Jesus, becomes enough to satisfy thousands. This teaches us that nothing we offer – no act of kindness, prayer, or generosity – is too small for God to use.

We are invited to participate in God's work today. Small gestures of care, encouragement, or sharing what we have can have greater impact than we imagine. Jesus shows us that when we bring our limited resources and trust them to God, they are multiplied, and everyone benefits. Discipleship calls us to compassionate action, to notice needs, and to offer what we can, trusting God to provide abundantly and transform ordinary efforts into blessings.

LEARN

God calls us to participate in his work of compassion; even small offerings, when entrusted to Christ, can be multiplied to meet the needs of others.

DO

Bring what little you have – time, talent, or resources – and trust God to use it to bless others.

SAY

Little things done with great love are mighty in God's sight.

St Thérèse of Lisieux



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O God, come to my assistance;
O Lord, make haste to help me!
You are my rescuer, my help;
O Lord, do not delay.*

COLLECT

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide,
you may restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 55:1-3

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord:

'Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 145(144):8-9. 15-16. 17-18. R. cf. 16

R: You open your hand and fulfil us, O Lord.

1. The LORD is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
How good is the LORD to all,
compassionate to all his creatures. **R.**
2. The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
You open your hand and satisfy
the desire of every living thing. **R.**
3. The LORD is just in all his ways,
and holy in all his deeds.
The LORD is close to all who call him,
who call on him in truth. **R.**

SECOND READING Romans 8:35, 37-39

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things

present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Matthew 4:4b

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 14:13-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' But Jesus said, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' They said to him, 'We have only five loaves here and two fish.' And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Graciously sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray,
and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual sacrifice,
make of us an eternal offering to you.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*You have given us, O Lord, bread from heaven,
endowed with all delights and sweetness in every taste.*

Or

*I am the bread of life, says the Lord;
whoever comes to me will not hunger
and whoever believes in me will not thirst.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Accompany with constant protection, O Lord,
those you renew with these heavenly gifts
and, in your never-failing care for them,
make them worthy of eternal redemption.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.