

Weekly Gospel Readings

The 5th Sunday of Epep

The Lord Multiplies the Offerings

On this Sunday (08/06/23), the Fifth Sunday of the blessed month of Epep, the Church reads [Luke 9:12-17](#). In this reading, Christ feeds the five thousand men (plus women and children) from five loaves and two fish. While many aspects of this miracle can be described, we will focus on how God blesses and multiplies the little that we offer, to serve others and glorify Him.

In the Pauline Epistle ([1 Corinthians 14:18-25](#)), St. Paul talks about the gift of speaking in tongues and how that gift must be used to preach the Word of God. St. Paul explains, “Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue” ([1 Corinthians 14:19](#)). We cannot waste the gifts that God has given us. We must use these gifts to serve and instruct others, and when we do so, God will open the hearts of those being served. As St. John Chrysostom explains, “For the one has but display only; the other, great utility.” When we use our gifts to serve others, we are fulfilling our Christian calling and the Lord will multiply the blessings of this service.

In the Catholic Epistle ([James 5:1-8](#)), St. James describes how we must not waste our time on the Earth by focusing on money, luxury, and riches. He writes, “Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you” ([James 5:1](#)). Rather, we must spend time on the Earth patiently waiting for the coming of the Lord and growing closer to Him. St. James encourages us saying, “You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord, is at hand ([James 5:8](#)).” How can we establish our hearts? We can establish our hearts by offering what we have to the Lord (whether it's money, time, our gifts, etc.). When we do this, the Lord will provide us with comfort and peace, knowing that we will be ready for the coming of the Lord.

Finally, in the Gospel, the Lord directly shows how He blesses all that we offer. Not only did Jesus multiply the five loaves and two fish in order to feed the multitude, but He provided a surplus of food for them to take home. As St. Ambrose explains, “They still did not understand that the food for believers is not to be purchased, but, Christ knows how to provide us with redemption, and with a free banquet.” In simple terms, when we offer to the Lord, He blesses and multiplies it.

Rather than wasting our lives in pleasures and lusts, let us always offer to the Lord. No matter how small or how large this offering is, God will multiply it and this offering will be used to reveal the glory of God to others.

Sources:

- Bible, English Standard Version
- Catena Bible, Church Father Commentaries
- Commentaries on the Gospel of St. Luke by Father Tadros Malaty