

Theme: ARE YOU READY AND WILLING TO HELP JESUS TO CONTINUE HIS MIRACLES?

This weekend, we celebrate the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. Pope Francis declared in 2021, the last Sunday in July, the closest Sunday to the feast of Saints Anne and Joachim, the grandparents of Jesus, as the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly.

The theme for this year's World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly is "DO NOT CAST ME OFF IN MY OLD AGE"- Psalm 71:9. According to Pope Francis, his theme was "meant to call attention to the fact that, sadly, loneliness is the bitter lot in the life of many elderly persons, so often the victims of the throwaway culture." He explained further: "By cherishing the charisms of grandparents and the elderly and the contribution they make to the life of church, the World Day seeks to support the efforts of every ecclesial community to forge bonds between the generations and to combat loneliness."

For me, our grandparents and the elderly are God's most precious gifts to us. Let us respect and love them when they are alive, not when they are dead. God's blessings to those living, and eternal rest grant unto those who are resting peacefully with the Lord. We truly love them in life and in death, until we all meet again in heaven.

Both the first and the Gospel readings deal with the miracles of the multiplication of loaves and fish to feed the poor and the hungry.

Personally, the poem written by St. Teresa of Avila resonates with me.

It goes, "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours."

Yes, it is so true that our Lord Jesus Christ has no hands and feet here on earth but ours to continue his earthly miracles. So, ARE YOU READY AND WILLING TO HELP JESUS TO CONTINUE HIS MIRACLES ?



As you heard in the first reading, the prophet Elisha was able to perform a miracle using twenty loaves he received from a generous man to feed a hundred people. Remember, Elisha used the twenty barley loaves harvested from the first fruits that were supposed to be offered to God to feed the hundred people who were hungry. He insisted that his servant must put his whole trust and faith in God and do what God had directed him to do. Elisha broke the red tape! Elisha's trust and faith in a mighty God he served was rewarded with this miracle.

We heard a similar story of the miracle of multiplication of bread in the Gospel where Jesus received five barley loaves of bread and two fish from a boy to feed five thousand men (women and children were excluded). This miracle of St. John is found in all four Gospels. My dear people of God, Jesus, like Elisha, also had full trust and faith in God that whatever he asked Him, God would honor his request. If God did it for Elisha and Jesus, he will surely do it for you, also, if only you put your total trust and faith in him.

Food, as you know, is the first necessity of life, and feeding the hungry is the first great Corporal Work of Mercy. I'm always very grateful to parishioners who are helping to feed our brothers and sisters at Crosslines/Parish house and the Washington Elementary School District. Thanks to the parishioners, our diocese, and the SVDS for their generosity in supporting this Corporal Work of Mercy. For many people in developed countries, food is not really your worry. Even those who don't have food can get it from soup kitchens, shelters, parishes, and other food organizations in the community. But we do know that many people in developing countries are concerned about having enough food and clean water. They are not concerned with weight gain. Fellow parishioners, Jesus continues to ask the question he posed to Philip: "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?" Through the generosity of a man whose name we do not know, Elisha fed one hundred people. In the Gospel, Jesus, also through the kindness of a small boy whose name is also unknown to us, used five loaves and two fish to feed over five thousand men. ARE YOU WILLING AND READY TO HELP JESUS CONTINUE HIS MIRACULOUS MINISTRIES? By sharing your gifts and talents with the poor and needy, you are helping Jesus to continue his miracles. BIG THANKS TO YOU! Just imagine the beautiful smiles and joys you bring to those who come to Parish House, the Salvation Army, Washington Elementary School for assistance or places you do your corporal works of mercy. If you share your gifts/talents generously, God will surely bless you abundantly. Both miracles tell us God and his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, truly care and love the poor and the needy. After Jesus fed the five thousand, he asked his disciples "to gather the fragments left over, so that nothing is wasted." Fellow parishioners, are we using our talents/gifts God has blessed us with well and not wasting it?

In the second reading, St. Paul reminds us that there is strength in unity. Yes, when we come together as Christian family, great things are accomplished in Jesus' name. This explains St. Paul's advice we heard in the second reading. He pleads the indulgence of the Ephesians and all of us to unite in Christ. The virtues that unite us together in Christ are LOVE, HUMILITY, GENTLENESS, AND PATIENCE. These virtues must be rooted in one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God, who is father to us all.

May our Holy Mother Mary and her beloved husband St. Joseph continue to intercede with their Son, Jesus Christ, for us that we will be faithful to the mission their Son has entrusted to us. Amen.