

Dear Lectors

*The following article is a reflection for the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time,
By: Loretta Peharich*

Hunger.—Craving.—Desire.
What consumes you?

Imagine for a moment that you are the unnamed boy in the crowd in today's Gospel, with five seemingly insignificant loaves and two scrawny fish. What do people expect from you? Does Andrew have to convince you to give up your treasures, or do you readily offer them for Jesus? Do you stand on the sidelines, watching? And what are you doing with five whole loaves and two fish? Can you picture carrying all those? One might say he was wealthy. For those of us in the developed world, it's easy to imagine having resources to feed ourselves, with leftovers. What does it feel like when Jesus asks if you are willing to give your wealth to serve others?

Jesus didn't tell the boy to keep something for himself and use only four loaves or one fish for the miracle. Jesus asked for it all. And with child-like faith, the boy gave, not worrying about going hungry himself. He trusted.

In the first reading, Elijah's servant objects, "How can I feed so many with so little?" We hear the same attitude today: "How can we possibly feed the homeless in our city?" Elijah's servant isn't the only one who underestimates the power of what we have.

We, too, are invited to work miracles. Miracles aren't just the stuff of history. They are all around us, right now.

The Gospel says that Jesus distributed the loaves. Can you imagine Jesus going up to each and every grouping on the grass? Or maybe he invited that little boy to help him. Imagine him taking a loaf and breaking it in half and asking you to go share it with a crowd of people seated over there.

In the Eucharist that we celebrate together this Sunday, Jesus will distribute living bread — to us. As you sit during the offering of the gifts at today's liturgy, think about the people seated in groups like the crowd waiting for Jesus to distribute bread. What does it feel like to know Jesus himself is coming to feed you?

We read that Jesus knew what he was going to do: He would give his very flesh to us. I imagine him breaking that loaf as if he was tearing off a piece of a motherly heart. Breaking it and offering it, not just as physical sustenance, but as a deep gesture of consuming love. His heart breaking with love for people. He breaks the



bread for us — you and me.

And he enlists us to go and break ourselves, to give a piece of our very hearts to others. If I have five loaves, Jesus is going to ask me for all of them.

But what he gives me back is going to be worth my sacrifice. Miraculous. Better than we can imagine.

Abundance. Leftovers. "As much of the food as they wanted."

See the little boy again as 12 baskets are collected. And Jesus comes over to you, with a big smile, and says, "Thank you. I couldn't have done this without you." And he hands you a basket full of leftovers. It's more than you gave.

St. Paul underscores this by urging us to live as people worthy of God's invitation to be miracle workers. And what will my miracles look like? Gentleness with someone who doesn't deserve it. Patience with someone who gets it nowhere else. Preserving unity when division is the norm.

Psalm 145 says, talk about God's might, at length! And not just regarding God's past deeds but the miracles of this day: "The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season; you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing" (v.15-16).

What has God given me to share — the real presence of Christ in our world — you and me.

Believe you are a miracle.

Some Information:

- Attached is the Lector Schedule from June 9, 2018 through September 23, 2018.
- Look for the Lector Schedule on our website, www.steseton.com under "Spiritual Life", "Minister Schedules", "Lectors."
- Mark your calendars, we will have the outdoor Mass and Parish Picnic this year on Sunday, August 5th at 3pm.
- There will be a sign up sheet for the Masses on The Feast of the Assumption, August 15th. There will be a Mass on Tuesday, August 14th at 7pm and two on Wednesday, August 15th one at 9am and the second at 7pm.

As we begin the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, may we find joy and peace in all of the ordinary moments surrounding us.

*With great appreciation,
Claudia Nolan*