

**HOMILY**  
**July 29 / 30, 2006**

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In the film documentary, Romero, we witness with horror the every increasing hatred focused on Archbishop Romero—a hatred that found expression in acts of violence. One of the most outrageous acts occurred on the day Romero bravely walked through a cordon of heavily armed soldiers to retrieve the Blessed Sacrament from the church they had seized to use as a barracks. As Romero approached it, a soldier fired repeatedly into the Tabernacle, fragmenting and scattering the hosts. Horrified but undaunted, Romero knelt and retrieved as many fragments as possible, expecting that he, too, would be riddled with bullets. Miraculously, he walked back through the group of soldiers carrying the Blessed Sacrament. His hour had not yet come; it would, later.

Throughout history, many men and women had shown great courage to protect and share the Eucharist. How can we ever take it for granted? In today's Gospel, Jesus miraculously fed the crowd with a few loaves and a couple of fish. He gave so much more that day than a few loaves of barley bread. He gave the promise of Eucharist, knowing that soon that promise would be fulfilled. It is no coincidence that the words we hear today are the same that Jesus spoke on Holy Thursday, words that reverberate through the centuries: *He took; He offered; He gave thanks.*

What drew thousands of people to that hillside? They were hungry, hungry for the word of God, hungry to be with the one person who offered them hope. They were so intent on listening to Jesus, they came unprepared to meet their physical hunger. But Jesus knew and, miraculously, he fed them. To the astonishment of all, he accepted five loaves from a young boy and said, "*It is enough.*"

There is more here than history, for the Gospels were written *about* us as well as *for* us. The Gospel challenges us to "go and do likewise," to imitate the same compassion. Each challenge reveals the criteria Jesus gave for entrance into the Kingdom: *I was hungry, thirsty, naked, ill—you came to me.*

Jesus is still hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, ill, imprisoned, and he asks us to see him suffering in his beloved poor. We need not look far to see Jesus in his poor. He is in every city, every village. The increase in requests for food in our backyard shouts this need. Even as we care for our brothers and sisters close to home, our vision must extend beyond the boundaries of our nation. Every single hour of the day, fifteen hundred of this world's children die of hunger or hunger-related causes. Their cry confronts us: *“Pray for us! Give us food!”* Is there enough?

Appalled at the wastefulness of their students, two elementary school teachers in Santa Cruz, California, planted a young sapling on the school's campus and named it the FREE FOOD TREE. Rather than throw away their uneaten or unwanted sandwiches, the children were encouraged to place them under the tree so that students who had lost their lunch or could not afford one could help themselves. Some children began to bring an extra sandwich from home so that they would have one to put under the FREE-FOOD TREE. Eventually, the supply of food was sufficient enough to nourish all the school's hungry children with enough left over to offer to the homeless who lived in the city park near the school.

And so to answer our question, is there enough? Most definitely there is enough. It is not a question of supply; it is a question of willingness to share; it is a question of being bread for the poor, food for those who hunger. Each time I hear today's story I recall that the place where the miracle took place for the last twelve hundred years has been a Benedictine Monastery. In the courtyard of the church, there is a mosaic on the wall over eight hundred years old. It shows a basket with loaves of bread and two fish—whereas in the story there are five loaves, in the basket there are clearly only four. Where's the fifth loaf? Did the artist forget? Actually, we who look at it are the fifth loaf; as you and I receive Jesus, the Bread of Life in the Eucharist, you and I are called to be bread for the hungry, food for the poor.

It is a question of not wasting; it is a question of remembering that the food in our pantry is the food for the poor at our door. In a few moments, in this very place, we ourselves will receive the Body and Blood of Christ. All who eat and are filled by the Bread of Life become responsible for one another as well as for those who hungers have yet to be satisfied.