

**Sunday, July 26, 2015**

## **Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion**

### **Mass Readings:**

**1st Reading**    2 Kings 4:42-44

**2nd Reading:**    Ephesians 4:1-6

**Responsorial:**    Psalm 145:10-11, 15-18

**Gospel:**         John 6:1-15

## **Growing in Humility, *Our Call to be Like Jesus***

*He withdrew again to the mountain alone. (John 6:15)*

Did you ever think that Jesus would let the crowd make him their king after he had multiplied the loaves and fishes? That may be what they wanted, but Jesus chose otherwise. He chose humility.

In today's second reading, Paul tells the Ephesians and all of us, "Live in a manner worthy of the call you have received" (Ephesians 4:1). We tend to reduce this invitation to specific points of action: I have to do this good thing, and I have to avoid that temptation. But what if Paul were urging us to imitate Jesus first and foremost in our dispositions—especially in our humility?

True humility means trying to avoid building ourselves up in the eyes of others. It means trying not to judge people harshly or bring them down in hopes of elevating ourselves. It means even avoiding the pride that can pop up when other people remark on our humility!

How can we learn from Jesus how to be meek and humble of heart? The answer may be found in the way we yield ourselves to God and let his grace shape our hearts and our minds. When we stop trying to earn God's approval or achieve other people's recognition and allow ourselves to be fed and strengthened by Jesus instead, grace multiplies—just as the loaves multiplied when Jesus offered them to his Father. Yielding to the Lord like this will open us to the grace we need to do those things we find hard to do on our own. It will keep us from promoting ourselves because we will be keenly aware of how much we owe the Lord.

Today, tell Jesus that you want his grace to help you view yourself a bit more humbly and view other people a bit more highly. Tell him that without grace, it is impossible to be humble. Ask him over and over again, and watch as he transforms your heart.

*"Lord, give me the grace to be just as humble as you were the day you fed the five thousand."*

(Many thanks to ***The Word Among Us*** ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) for allowing us to use meditations from their monthly devotional magazine. Used with permission.)

**Sunday, July 26, 2015**

***Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion***

1. In the first reading, the prophet Elisha feeds a hundred people with “twenty barley loaves.” In what way does this story prefigure Christ's miracle of the multiplication of loaves? In the “Our Father,” we ask the Lord for “our daily bread.” In what ways does the Lord feed you and provide you with daily sustenance?
2. The Responsorial Psalm ends with these words: “The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth.” How important do you think it is to call upon the Lord in a daily time of personal prayer and Scripture reading? If you don't already have a daily time of personal prayer and Scripture reading, are you willing to commit 15 minutes a day to it? If not, what are your reasons?
3. In the letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul reminds us how we are to live together in humility and unity as Christians. In particular he uses the words "one" or "unity" nine times. What are some of the characteristics of this call to unity? If St. Paul were to visit you today, what would you be able to tell him about your attempts to live in unity with others in your family, in your parish, and with friends and neighbors? What additional steps can you take to increase the "bond of peace" with your fellow Catholics? Other Christians?
4. The Gospel relates the story of the multiplication of the loaves, which itself prefigures the Eucharist. The bread in this story sustains earthly life, while the Eucharist sustains us for eternity and is the full manifestation of Christ's boundless love for us. It is a meal we share together in humility as Catholics, a sign and cause of unity. What steps can you take to deepen your experience of Christ, and his love for you, when you receive the Eucharist?
5. The Second Vatican Council called the Eucharist "the source and summit of the Christian life". The Greek word "Eucharist" itself means "thanksgiving". How thankful are you for this great gift of Christ?
6. In the meditation, we hear these words: “In today's second reading, Paul tells the Ephesians and all of us, “Live in a manner worthy of the call you have received” (Ephesians 4:1). We tend to reduce this invitation to specific points of action: I have to do this good thing, and I have to avoid that temptation. But what if Paul were urging us to imitate Jesus first and foremost in our dispositions—especially in our humility?” The meditation goes on to describe “true humility” in this way: “True humility means trying to avoid building ourselves up in the eyes of others. It means trying not to judge people harshly or bring them down in hopes of elevating ourselves. It means even avoiding the pride that can pop up when other people remark on our humility!” How do you rate yourself against this definition? What steps can you take to grow in humility?
7. Take some time now to pray for the grace to learn from Jesus in regard to humility and for the grace to grow in humility. Use the prayer at the end of the meditation as the starting point.

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, a director of partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>); a ministry of *The Word Among Us* ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) to the military, prisoners, women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions, and college students. He is also a member of the National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Maurice was also the founding Executive Director of the **National Fellowship of Catholic Men**, for which he is currently a Trustee (<http://www.nfcmusa.org/>). He can be contacted at [mblumberg@wau.org](mailto:mblumberg@wau.org) or [mblumberg@aol.com](mailto:mblumberg@aol.com).]