

Homily for the 17th Sunday Ordinary Time Year B

The readings this Sunday proclaim how God in his generosity provides and nourishes his people with food. Elisha the prophet feeds 100 people with 20 barley loaves, but Jesus feeds 5,000 with 5 barley loaves because He is not just a prophet but the Son of God! In this miracle, Jesus prepares the ground for his teaching on giving himself as the Bread of Life – the Eucharist.

Dear Friends in Christ, such miracles do still happen in a variety of ways. Two weeks ago, out of nowhere without expecting it, we had the good news that an anonymous donor chose to give \$1 million to St. John's for the construction of the One Community Center. In good faith the anonymous donor will send the first installment of \$250,000 next week. We need to do our part in gratitude for this generous gift.

The miracle of the multiplication of 5 barley loaves and 2 fish by Jesus to feed 5000 people, is a perfect story for our capital campaign. Imagine Jesus seeing a large crowd coming and asking Philip, "where can we get enough food for them to eat?"

We heard that Jesus said this to test him since He knew what He was going to do. We have been asking the same question on the capital campaign. Where can we get enough pledges to reach our goal of \$ 2.5 million?

Just as it looked impossible to feed the 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish, so too it looks almost impossible for us to achieve our goal. Jesus is testing us to see our response to the challenge.

Dear friends in Christ, it takes a leap of faith to raise \$ 900,000! But with 3-year pledges we can do it. We can actually wrap up phase II of our capital campaign this Sunday. A miracle can happen right before your eyes. All we need is 50 parishioners at each Mass to make a 3-year pledge of \$ 145 per month which is \$4.85 a day – the cost of a Starbuck Coffee! Those 175 pledges plus all other pledges will enable us reach our goal of \$ 2.5 million and more like the miracle of the 5 loaves.

If you are willing to be one of those 50 at this Mass, go to the first table on the lanai after Mass. This slide shows how the multiplication of loaves works when

applied to a capital campaign and becomes the multiplication of pledges. Is this possible? Yes. Let's proceed and wrap up the capital campaign. That will be the miracle before our eyes.

Here is the simple math:

50 at each Mass X145 X36 months X 5 Masses = \$ 1,305,500! Trust me. We will wrap up the capital campaign this Sunday.

We want to give everyone an opportunity for to make a pledge. If you have not yet pledged, do not be afraid of what you can pledge. We only need your pledge today.

Even as we recover from the joy of the \$ 1 million anonymous gift, I have more good news! Because of our generosity to Fr. Herman two weeks ago, he has given us a 1st Class Relic of St. Damien which is now displayed here for veneration. You may come forward after Mass to venerate the relic. Because God has been so generous, please respond with your pledge so we may raise the remaining \$ 900,000 in order to receive the \$1 million dollars gift from the anonymous donor.

Let me finish with the good news. We have the money to reach our goal, but the bad news is that the money is still in our wallets!

We are BUILDING the OCC to connect, engage, witness and to reach out in our neighborhood. Let me conclude my homily by revealing that we have yet another "miracle" of how our parish has been instrumental in connecting people on our campus. I would like to welcome Mike Browning to tell that story that illustrates why we are building the OCC. Mike....See Mike's powerful witness.

Msgr. John S. Mbinda