

# ***Eve of the Fast for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Hunger***

*Delivered by Rev. Fr. Ghevond Ajamian  
St. Sarkis Armenian Church, Carrollton, TX  
September 4, 2016  
Gospel Reading: Mark 6:35-44*

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In today's Gospel reading we hear a familiar and well-known miracle of Christ, which is the only miracle to be recorded in all four Gospels: the feeding of the 5,000. The evangelist describes the miracle taking place in the early evening hours, when the disciples approaching Jesus and advising Him to let the people go to the surrounding villages and farms collect food for dinner.

Christ answers them, by saying, "You give them something to eat" to which the disciples respond that they have nothing to give except for five loaves of bread and two fish. Christ orders the disciples to seat the people on the grass in groups of fifty and one hundred. He then takes the bread and fish, blesses them, gives thanks, breaks them and gives them to His disciples, who in turn distribute them to the people. The evangelists also recounts that all 5,000 were filled and the remaining leftover food was enough to fill twelve baskets.

But what really happened at this miracle? Something greater than just feed 5,000 people, but rather, Christ satisfied three different types of hunger the people had: spiritual hunger, emotional hunger and physical hunger.

Spiritual hunger is satisfied with Christ's words and teachings and we see this because the Gospel says they were following Jesus. When one is spiritually hungry, no material or physical object can ever satisfy that hunger. Many of us have seen people who have homes, cars, planes and islands, but they are still hungry for something and can't fill that hunger. Those are the individuals who need Christ in their lives and His teachings.

Christ also fills the people's emotional hunger. People are lonely, both in Jesus' time and today – perhaps even more so today. We need and crave companionship, attention and affection. Today, we have become a society that voices our problems and concerns through social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter. When we need support, we wait to see people's comments and "likes", how many friends or followers we have, but what we really

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need is a hand to hold ours, an ear to hear us and a voice saying, “I am with you and praying for you”. This is why Christ orders the disciples to seat the people in groups of 50 and 100, so that they can interact, comfort and rejoice with one another.

And finally, He also answered the original concern of the disciples, that they were physically hungry. The Lord showed that through His hands they would receive their daily bread. We constantly strive to acquire food for our families and ourselves, but we must always remember that whatever we have is given to us by God.

Yet, this miracle is more than just telling us about Christ’s culinary skills or how He satisfied their hungers, but Christ gives us an example as how to fill others’ spiritual, emotional and physical hungers. Naturally, many of us will give the disciples’ answers that we do not have anything, but saying, “I do not have anything to give” translates to God as, “I do not want to give anything”. We all have something to give, no matter how small it may seem to us, God wants us to use that to satisfy the hunger of others.

The Bible is filled with examples of God using the little that people had to fulfill His will: Moses may have said he has nothing to give, but God said place your staff in the sea and I will part it.

Elisha may have said he has nothing to give, but God said put the cloak that Elijah gave you in the Jordan River and I will separate it.

David may have said he has nothing to give, but God said use your sling and five stones and we will slay the giant.

Mary may have said she has nothing to give, but God said I will place My Son in your womb. Joseph of Arimathea may have said he has nothing to give, but God said give me your tomb for the weekend and I will give it back.

Whatever we have, even if it seems little or insignificant in our eyes will be multiplied and become great in Christ’s hands. So let us look in our lives at what we have to give the Lord, the Church and each other to satisfy the spiritual, emotional and physical hungers of our brothers and sisters. For even if we give the very little we have, we will be amazed at the miracles God will perform with us, through us and for us.

Amen.