



# Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

## **Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

August 4, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

### ***“Jesus, the Bread of Life”***

The Bread of Life discourses start this Sunday. The Gospel account of the miracle of feeding the five thousand men last Sunday is a prequel to the events and discussions of Jesus’ teachings on the bread of life. This Gospel is one of those astonishing chapters and verses in the Gospel of John. As the story goes, Jesus says, “I am the Bread of Life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” If we listen to these words of Jesus in His time, it will make us wonder what it will mean for us. We may take it as something so wonderful to hear, but we will just be thinking about the bread to eat in our minds. But in truth, the statement leads us into a deeper reflection of Jesus’ act of performing the “sign,” which is the multiplication of the five barley loaves and two fish.

After the miracle, the crowd wants to make Jesus king. For them, it is a sign of high expectation that someone among them can provide food. Jesus slips away from them. The people did not understand the “sign.” They continue to pursue Him so that He may give them everyday food. Though He freed Himself with His disciples from the crowd, they still find Him. They seek Him out only for one reason: they have been given a lot of bread, gratuitously and without cost, and they hope to continue being fed like this for long without having to work. This is not supposed to be how things would go. What Jesus tries to instill in people’s minds is to recognize their gifts and share them with everyone. We remember that a boy shares his five barley loaves and two fish.

Jesus knew what the crowd or the people had in mind, so He taught them about the Real Food that satisfies hunger. Thus, the discussion goes to an extent. The people seek the bread that gives life to the world. They plead to Him to continuously provide this bread. Thus, Jesus says, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” The people wondered what this would mean for them. Still, Jesus knows that they seek only the physical hunger that can be satisfied by eating something, bread, for that matter. They find Jesus just for the bread and maybe the fish, too, and they do not get the whole picture of what He did for them.

For our reflection this Sunday, we may ask ourselves what we seek from the Lord? Do we look for Him to answer and provide all our needs? Do we find Him for the proper purpose? Do we understand the meaning of the sign of the bread? Or are we like the crowd who keep looking for Jesus only for the food that gives temporary satisfaction?

May you open up your heart, especially during these difficult times, to share whatever you have with those who are needy, physically and spiritually, like Jesus did.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual