



The Word
18th Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 2, 2026

Call to Prayer and Sharing

- ✦ *Leader invites all into a few moments of silent reflection to remember that we are in the presence of God. (reflective pause)*

- ✦ *Then: “In the name of the Father and of the Son . . .”*

The Word of God

- ✦ *Leader reads part or all of one of the scripture texts from the previous Sunday.*

Matthew 14:13-21

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist,
he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself.
The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns.
When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd,
his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick.
When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said,
“This is a deserted place and it is already late;
dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages
and buy food for themselves.”
Jesus said to them, “There is no need for them to go away;
give them some food yourselves.”
But they said to him,
“Five loaves and two fish are all we have here.”
Then he said, “Bring them here to me,”
and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass.
Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven,
he said the blessing, broke the loaves,
and gave them to the disciples,
who in turn gave them to the crowds.
They all ate and were satisfied,
and they picked up the fragments left over—
twelve wicker baskets full.
Those who ate were about five thousand men,
not counting women and children.

Faith Sharing

- ✦ *Leader reminds everyone of the Question of the Week which relates to the particular group gathered . . .*

Children: Have you shared your meal/food with another student outside your home? How did you feel about it?

Teens: When did you take the opportunity of giving food to someone who needed it? What motivated you?

Adults: In what ways have you impacted other people's lives through generous giving?

We offer this form of contemplative sharing for pondering Scripture while considering the question, and for the faith sharing which follows.

- Listen/ Read (Lectio): Ponder God's word and listen for what touches your heart.
- Meditate (Meditatio): Notice what you notice. Allow God's word to resonate in you.
- Speak/Share (Oratio): Prayerfully share with the group your thoughts and feelings.
- Rest in God's presence (Contemplatio): Notice God's presence and be still, surrounded by God's love.
- Choose to act (*Actio*): Trusting in God's nearness, commit to action rooted in love.

Time is provided for sharing responses to the question. Silence between responses is to be expected. Allow about 15 minutes for faith sharing. For larger groups, leader invites members to divide into groups of three or four for faith sharing.

- ✦ *When the sharing comes to an end, the leader invites everyone to take a moment to silently and reverently hold what has been shared together.*
- ✦ *Continue with the meeting, turning to the agenda.*

Concluding the meeting

At the end of the meeting, the leader closes with the following prayer:

Good and Gracious God,
your love for us surpasses all understanding.
As we leave here today,
be with us in all our comings and goings,
and in all that we say and do.
We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus who is our Light.
Amen.