

A Message from Father Vincent

July 21, 2021

Dear Friends:

I hope you are all well and staying cool (and dry with all this rain we've had). It's been great to see so many of you returning to Mass. I have truly enjoyed meeting all of you in person.

We will have a visiting Priest at all the Masses this weekend for our annual missionary appeal. His name is Fr. Radoslaw Jaszczuk from the Prelature of Esquel in Argentina.

This Prelature was created by Pope Benedict XVI on March 14, 2009, from the Rivadavia Diocese and covers more than 30,000 square miles with a population of about 70,000 inhabitants. Since the Prelature was created 3 new parishes have been established. Presently 11 priests along with 13 nuns and 3 seminarians serve the parishes in Patagonia, Argentina. None of the parishes are self-supporting because most of their parishioners are extremely poor and are not able to donate money to the church. We welcome Fr. Jaszczuk to Our Lady of Mercy this weekend!

Just a few thoughts on the readings for this weekend - this weekend's Gospel is the multiplication of loaves and fish. It shows the lack of faith by the disciples to follow Jesus's directives. At first glance, the Gospel seems like a simple math problem. How can Jesus divide five barley loaves and two fish among 5,000 people? Oh, ye of little faith! That is the difference between God's math and ours: **God does not divide; God multiplies.**

We often look at our lives and our world with a focus on scarcity and, on being scared, that the Lord will not provide – not only the material things in life but also the strength needed to endure times of struggle and suffering. But our God is a God that does not divide, our God is a God that multiplies – if we let Him. Our God is not a God of scarcity, but a God of abundance. It's a story (if we look at it in the bigger picture) of overcoming fear in our lives. Fear that God will not provide – materially and spiritually.

But God tells us:

The Lord is near. (Phil. 4:5)

You are in me, and I am in you. (John 14:20)

I am with you always with you, to the very end of the age. (Matt. 28:20)

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28)

Nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. (Rom. 8:38)

We cannot go where God is not. Look over your shoulder; that's God following you. Look into the storm; that's Christ coming toward you.

Feed your fears, and your faith will starve.

Feed your faith, and your fears will.

With love and appreciation for each one of you,

In Christ,

+ Father Vasant