**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR. (Matthew 14: 17-21) August 2, 2020.**

**Theme: Christ Satisfies our Hunger**

**REFLECTION**

A quick reading of the scriptures for this Sunday gives us the impression that no matter what, God cares for us. As the gospel expresses it beautifully, “his heart was moved with pity” Therefore, “he cured their sick.” Food is supplied abundantly and freely. What Jesus does, the prophet Isaiah had promised: “come without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk.” In writing to the Romans, Paul insists that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The miracle of the loaves is the only miracle recounted in all the four gospels. In Mathew and Marks’s gospels the disciples ask Jesus to send the crowd away. They are concerned about the hunger of the people. Instead Jesus asks them to do something about the situation themselves. How do the disciples react to this seemingly impossible request? It would be impossible to such a huge crowd with only five loaves and two fish. The disciples are portrayed as people of faith but a faith that is still weak. Jesus helped them grow in faith. We need to be helped by Jesus to grow in our faith. The readiness of the disciples to contribute what they have makes it possible for Jesus to bless their gifts and feed a great multitude. Without Jesus, it would have been impossible, but with Jesus, it became possible. Jesus acts out of compassion. When Jesus’ compassion and our faith and collaboration come together, miracles happen.

The compassion and trusting attitude of the disciples invites us to imitate them. There are countless examples of need in our world today. Millions of people suffer hunger, sickness and unemployment, racial or religious discrimination, wars and so on. It is so easy to say: “The problem is simply too big for me to do something about it,” And walk away from it.

The example of the disciples encourages us to give whatever little help we can. What we do may alleviate the plight of just a few people, but for those it is a great thing. No doctor can ever cure the sick but this does not stop him from helping those he can. Nobody is so poor as not to be able to share, and nobody is so rich as not to need the help of another.

God our kind Father, you have been kind and generous to each one of us so many times. With our whole hearts we give you thanks. Continue to be generous towards us, we pray; but we also ask you to teach us to be generous like you and share what we have with our neighbor. Amen.

By Sister Pedro Opara,( NES)

**The New Evangelization Sisters of Mother of Perpetual Help, Nigeria.**

The New Evangelization Sisters of Mother of Perpetual Help is a fast-growing women’s religious Order founded in 1993 in Nigeria by Most. Rev. Dr. Anthony Gbuji the first Catholic Bishop of Issele-Uku in response to the incessant call of St. John Paul 11 to a New Era of Evangelization.

The New Evangelization Sisters have more than 120 sisters working in many countries of the world such as: United States of America, in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Rome, Italy, Austria, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, and so many dioceses in Nigeria.

**Our Mission**

**Evangelization is the heart call of our Vocation.**

The New Evangelization Sisters engage in the following works: Primary Evangelization, Catechesis, Spiritual Animation, Clinical Services, Teaching, Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dialogue, Outreaches to schools, homes, prisons, churches, hospitals, and caring for the needy, the motherless, widows and the elderly.

**OUR NEEDS:**

* Assist the poor and the Widows in our society.
* Feed so many sisters in Formation
* Pay for some sisters College tuition
* Complete sisters’ hostel and retirement home.

Please brothers and sisters, we ask you to assist us in any way you can for nothing is so small. We thank you for your generous donations to help our mission. May the Lord bless you and your families and reward you abundantly. I regret that I can’t be in your parish to share our mission this year because of COVID-19. Thank you all, and God bless.

Sr. Pedro Opara, NES on behalf of the New Evangelization Sisters of Nigeria, West Africa.