

5th Sunday of Easter

This week the cathedral will move our breakfast service to a new location. Thanks to our donors, Morning Glory Ministries will continue to help the needy on this side of downtown. In addition to providing breakfast, we keep office hours for emergency assistance, such as helping people get an ID, a birth certificate, backpacks, shoes, hygiene products and coats. We have already moved emergency assistance into this building. When our new building opens next year, it will contain a more ample space for emergency assistance.

The meal service is taking up a permanent home inside the Catholic Center at 9th and Baltimore. In addition to housing our diocesan offices, that building is the residence of Bishop James Johnston. The bishop had an insight last summer while praying on the feast of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus. As Martha had welcomed Jesus into her home, he wanted to welcome Jesus into his home. After all, Jesus said, “What you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me.” Recognizing Christ in the needy of his own neighborhood, Bishop Johnston has authorized the remodeling of the cafeteria on the bottom floor of the Catholic Center, where volunteers can still welcome Christ off the streets and up to a table.

God provides for those in need, and our responsorial psalm this weekend makes the same point. The Lord rescues from death the souls of those who fear him, and keeps them “alive in famine.” The bible is filled with accounts of the miraculous provision of food: manna in the desert, the flight of Elijah to Mount Horeb, and the multiplication of loaves, for example. The particular incident that prompts us to sing Psalm 33 today comes from our first reading in Acts of the Apostles. This passage is generally accepted as the creation of the first deacons in the Church. It shows how sometimes God chooses an extraordinary solution to the problem of hunger. In this case, Greek widows complained to the Hebrews that they were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. The apostles decided this needed a new layer of management to ensure that the hungry were fed at their table. They chose seven men of good reputation to take on this task. As a result, we still have excellent deacons serving the church in many ways today. Psalm 33 seems to foresee this when it affirms that God will keep his chosen ones “alive in famine.”

With Morning Glory Ministries, we fill the desires of those who need food. Many other organizations—local, national and global—also work to stamp out hunger. In a few minutes you’ll hear about the work of the Little Sisters of the Poor. If the right people raise their voice, people of good will will answer the call. Give credit to the Greek widows in today’s first reading: They complained about their situation, and the community responded in ways beyond their imagining that continue to nourish the Church two thousand years later.

If you feel moved to provide food for the hungry, you can do it with contributions to our Building Glory capital campaign, the Little Sisters, or to the Annual Catholic Appeal. Or, when our new café opens next week, you can give your time to set up, serve up, and clean up breakfast for our guests downtown. When the hungry pray as we all did in the responsorial today, “Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you,” you will be one of the means that God chooses to keep them alive.

Saturday, May 6, 2023