

## FEBRUARY 14, 2026 MSGR. ROBERT NUSCA

Today's Gospel of Saint Mark describes for us our Lord's miraculous feeding of four thousand people.

The great crowds, as we have heard, have gathered around our Lord to learn His teachings and to seek His healing graces. As we have just heard, Jesus is moved to pity because the people had been with Him now for three days and had nothing to eat. So, I think several things emerge for our reflection.

First of all, the miracles of our Lord are powerful signs to us of the arrival of the Kingdom of God. Indeed, in the words of one commentator, "The miracles of Jesus are a kind of sign language between Heaven and earth. They are pictures of eternity cast on the screen of time. Through them, the natural world is continually shaken to its depths."

In so many ways, then, our religion does not just accept miracles, but is a religion of miracles. From the Annunciation by the Archangel Gabriel, to the miracles of Jesus, the Resurrection, the Ascension of our Lord, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The miracles of Jesus have also been called "counter-signs to the fallen human condition brought about by the disobedience of Adam." What can we say? Just as Adam's disobedience brought about suffering, sickness, and death, now Jesus Christ, the new Adam, brings us the fullness of God's healing and restorative graces, together with the promise of everlasting life, through His obedience, His "yes" to the will of the Father.

Saint Paul says this so clearly in his First Letter to the Corinthians: “Just as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.”

Secondly, the miracles of our Lord ultimately point to a new creation, the new Heaven and earth that will arrive at the end of time. Saint John describes this for us in the Book of Revelation, where he foresees a glorious time when God will dwell with His people. He writes, “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. Mourning, and crying, and pain will be no more, for these first things have passed away.”

So while the miracles of Jesus mark a great, and we say, pivotal point in the history of salvation, and they signal the arrival of a new creation, I think it is also important for us to see how our Lord calls each of us right now to become that new creation in Christ.

Each of us has been called to the life of holiness at baptism. I think this is so important for us to bear in mind, as so often, like the disciples in today’s Gospel, we cannot quite see beyond our own lack of resources. The disciples overlook the most important factor, namely that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is in their midst and can work this miracle.

So too in our own lives. We have problems. We have concerns. We worry about the future. We are burdened by the past. All too often, like the first disciples, we do not bring God far enough into the equation. We do not invite the healing, restorative, miraculous graces of God into the everyday struggles of life through a renewed life of prayer.

And yet the history of the Church is filled with examples of great saints who did amazing things in very difficult times, precisely because they knew how and where to find Jesus Christ amid the concrete circumstances of everyday life. The saints, foremost among them Mary,

the Mother of God, are those who really believe that all things are possible with God.

Thirdly, we should remember that beyond the miracles of Jesus, the earliest disciples were not only sent out to proclaim the Gospel, to proclaim the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven, but also to perform miracles. Too often that is overlooked.

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter ten, we are told that as Jesus sends the disciples out, He commissions them to preach that the Kingdom of Heaven has come near, but He also instructs them to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cleanse those who have leprosy, and to drive out demons. And Jesus says, “Freely you have received, and freely give.”

Yes, ours is a God of compassion, a God of mercy. And Jesus shows us so clearly that what Jesus does by nature, His followers are called to do by participation.

Jesus makes the amazing statement in the Gospel of John, chapter fourteen: “Whoever believes in me will do the works that I have been doing. They will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father.”

What do we see in the Gospels? Peter walks on water. In the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke tells us that many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. We are told of the miracles of Peter and of Paul.

Saint Stephen, said to be full of grace and power, has done great wonders and signs among the people. Moreover, at the time of his own martyrdom, Saint Stephen is filled with the Holy Spirit and is said to be able to see the heavens open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

In his letters, Saint Paul alludes to his own experience of the third Heaven, leading us to reflect on the mystery of being transformed into, in the words of Paul, being conformed to the image of Christ. Paul also speaks of having the mind of Christ.

In the centuries that would follow, the Church Fathers would come to express this idea that, for the sake of His own glory, God has granted us a share in His divinity. We see this in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, for instance in paragraph 460: “The Word became flesh to make us partakers of the divine nature.”

So we have Saint Irenaeus, Saint Athanasius, and Thomas Aquinas, each in their own way expressing this view that God became what we are in order that we might become what He is.

And I think this is such an important and relevant message for us today. I have said this on other occasions. Theologians in our time have long spoken of the eclipse of God.

In our globalized, post-modern, post-truth era, in the dawn of the age of artificial intelligence, I think it is so important for us to see how we are witnessing, at the same time, the eclipse of the sense of the greatness of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God. For, in the words of one philosopher, “Where there is no God, there is no humanity either.”

Saint Gregory of Nyssa warns of the dangers of the divine image becoming obscured, darkened within our hearts. So he cautions that we must never neglect our own growth and progress in the spiritual life. We need, in biblical terms, to keep our lamps lit, to safeguard our treasure hidden in the field, to protect this pearl of great price, which is ultimately within us, the image and likeness of God in our hearts.

Ours is a time when, for so many people, there is no God. Humanity no longer strives to live in accord with the divine image and likeness of God within. We see this basic change—can we call it an utter distortion?—in society’s attitude toward human life.

We see it particularly in the case of euthanasia, “mercy killing,” now referred to as “medical assistance in dying.” Far beyond being permitted, more and more it is being encouraged in the name of compassion, in the name of dignity.

So it is that in our globalized, post-truth world, we are destined to be, like Jesus Himself, signs of contradiction in a world that shows no regard for the sacredness of human life from conception until natural death.

So as we continue to celebrate this Mass, let us pray through the intercession of Saints Cyril and Methodius that we may always cultivate those spiritual conditions of prayer and contemplation within ourselves that are most conducive to our lifelong growth in holiness.

Let us always extend God’s own love and mercy to others, especially the poor, the hungry, the lost, the sick, the lonely, the abandoned, and to the growing numbers in our world who live on the margins of society—indeed, all those for whom Jesus Himself showed a special love and concern.

And let us always remember the words of a modern commentator: “*Yes, we are dust. We are dust and unto dust we shall return, but this dust is joined to the breath of God. This dust is joined to the fire of the Holy Spirit.*”