

August 5, 2024

# Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

## TRUST IN GOD!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

### Today's Gospel

*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." He 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.*

## Reflection

At the heart of the readings for today is our call, as faithful followers, to place our trust in God. It is not to place our trust in what "we" can do ... it is to seek the more – what God is asking of us at any given moment in our lives.

In the Gospel from Matthew, we see Jesus wanting some alone time to pray. We hear how Jesus healed the sick, and how Jesus fed the thousands gathered to hear him preach. With so little food at his disposal, Jesus didn't view this as an insurmountable task; he lifted the loaves and fish toward his Father in heaven and prayed, trusting that God would hear him.

I find this passage incredibly touching because Jesus was mourning the death of John the Baptist; the violent and barbaric death of the one who had baptized him. Even with such a heavy heart, there was room for compassion and pity for the people who were following him. He took the time to heal the sick and then he looked to God so the people might be fed. He blessed and broke the bread ... a clear foreshadowing of the Last Supper and all that was to follow.

It calls me to gently dismantle all that shields my heart from the cries of the suffering of so many in our world. When we listen to the nightly news, we are reminded of the destruction we are wreaking on one another through war, hatred, racism, deceit, greed, abuse of power, and so on. At times I want to turn from all of it; yet this is not what you and I called to do. What each of us who consider ourselves Christian (or name your religious affiliation) must do is respond with compassion and open-heartedness. What is ours to do? It won't be as astounding as Jesus feeding the thousands gathered, yet in our everyday acts of kindness and generosity, we are building up the Body of Christ. We are keeping our hearts open to respond to the needs before us ... just like Jesus did so many years ago.

### ***Trust in God!***

O trust in God and lean into your faith, child of God. Do not turn from the ills of the world for you are the one who must respond using the gifts, talents, and resources I have given you.

Look, O look with the eyes of the Beloved on your brothers and sisters. Do you not see the suffering and pain that relentlessly is inflicted on those least able to respond?

Run, O run into the world with eyes and hearts wide open to the ravages across the globe. As a Church, may we participate in the "field hospitals for the vulnerable" to which Pope Francis calls us.

Pray, trust, and seek the Lord with the confidence that flows from your faith. Let us respond in the ways that we can, and may we not shy away from all that seems too burdensome.

Let us lift our wounded hearts in prayer, for the wisdom to respond within our needs and capabilities demands action. Let us not turn away; no, let us act now, for our brothers and sisters need us now.

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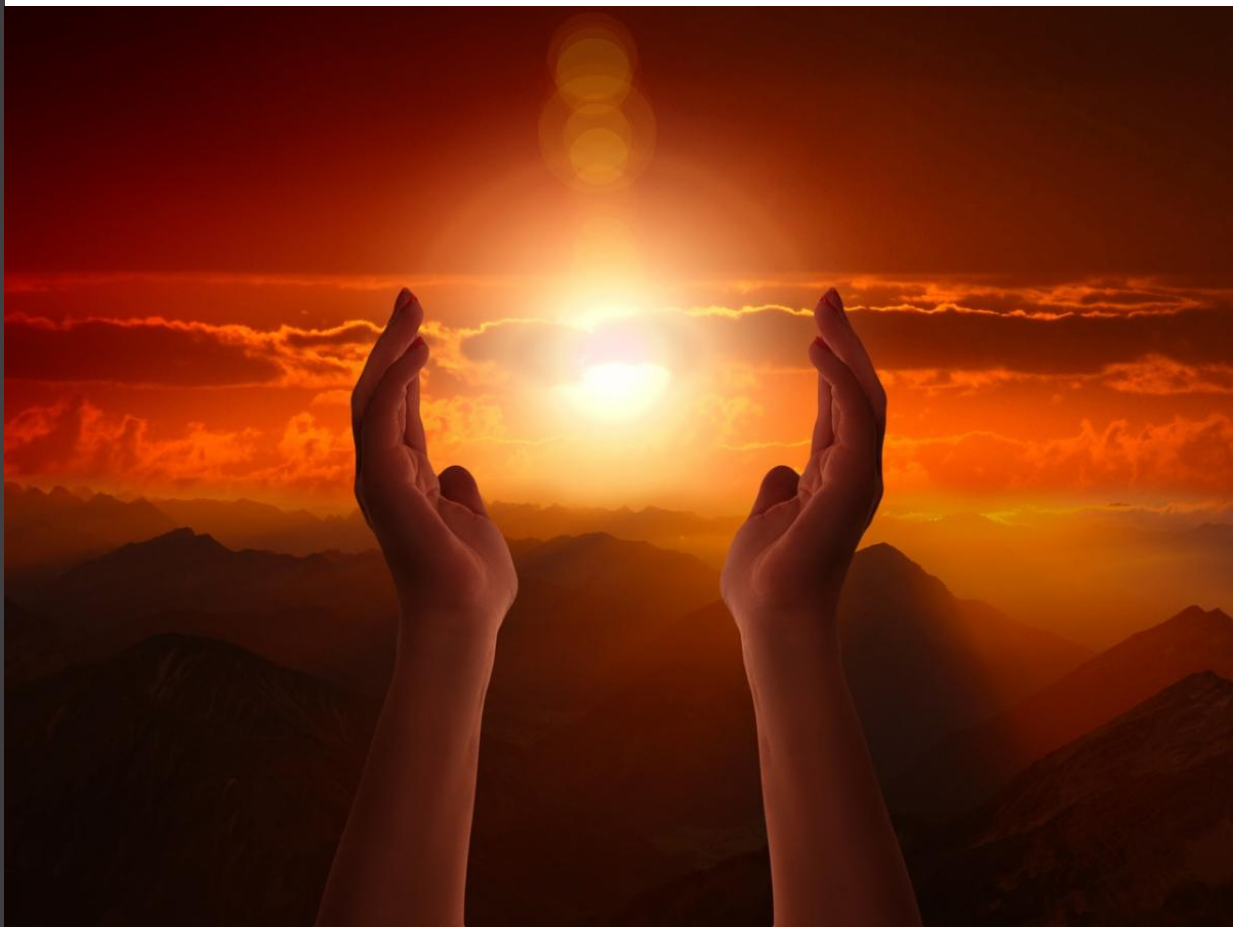


Image by Gerd Altmann

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### For Pondering

- When have you been "moved with pity and compassion" to assist someone in need? How was this for you and for the person(s) you assisted? Did you see the face of Jesus in the people you assisted?
- Often in the medical setting, we are asked to rate our pain level on a scale



of one to ten, with ten being extreme pain. How would you rate your trust in God, with ten being total trust in the Lord? Give some thought and prayer to what supports your number.

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## For Prayer

*O God,  
the demands and needs of the world seem insurmountable.  
Give us the courage to sort through all that blocks our ability  
to respond with generosity of heart.  
We lift up in prayer those most in need of compassion and kindness  
as we look within ourselves as to how we might respond.  
Amen.*

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