

August 4, 2025

Daily Reflections



PROVIDER GOD

By Sister 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

This passage from Matthew's Gospel always softens my heart because of how Jesus responds to the crowds. He's in grief over the brutal death of John the Baptist, yet his heart is moved with pity in seeing the crowds who are seeking healing and wisdom from Jesus.

As a high introvert, Jesus going off in a boat to a deserted place by himself sounds like something I would want to do to grieve the loss of someone close to me. I like to picture this in my mind's eye because it makes Jesus so accessible and human, even though he is also fully Divine. It is a reminder for each of us to allow ourselves and others to grieve in ways that are most beneficial to them.

It also is a reminder not to isolate ourselves in our times of grief. Through our relationships and interactions, we begin to heal our own grief. It's a balance of giving and receiving that I find helpful in this passage. Jesus doesn't ignore his feelings, and he doesn't let them hinder him from responding in compassion and gentleness to those in need.



LePuy-En-Velay, France
Photo by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- As the topic of grief is a part of this passage, is there any grief in your life that is unresolved? If so, reflect on how you might continue to process your grief.
 - How and when are you "moved with pity" and able to come out of yourself and tend to those around you?
 - During your own times of grief, how do you find that balance between time alone and remaining in healthy relationship with those in your life?
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For Prayer

*O God of healing and compassion,
may we accompany those who are struggling with grief.
May we be a gentle presence in their lives,
allowing those grief-stricken the time and space to heal.
We lift up all who are burdened by sadness and grief
and pray for God's healing grace to alight gently upon their hearts.
Amen.*

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