



ST. PATRICK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

4797 Curtis Blvd Port ST. John FL 32927

**Rose Sunday in Lent
March 29, 2025**

**✠ In The Name of The Father and of The Son
and of The Holy Ghost. Amen.**

The passage selected for the sermon today is from the Gospel:

"For this He said to prove him for he knew what He would do." St. John iv: 5

This is Rose Sunday, which is also known as Mothering Sunday. It is appropriate that we think about our Mothers today, both genetic and spiritual. Our language is full of terms that reflect our admiration for mothering. We reverence Mother Earth, we honor our Motherland, we rejoice when we hit the mother lode, and when we are hurt, or lonely or unhappy, we reach out for our Mothers. We claim that we live in a man's world, with male privilege, but the first word our children learn is "mama". The toughest athlete turns to the camera on Sunday afternoon and says "Hi, Mom".

In the Gospel account this morning, Jesus gives His Apostles, and all of us, instruction, about how his Bride, the Church, will Mother, nourish and protect her children. The account is familiar. Jesus has been teaching, showing the signs and miracles that have been prophesied to identify the Messiah. He pauses to rest at this mountain, and as He looks up, He sees

the multitude that had been following Him, gathered together as the day grows late .

He tests the faith of His Apostles, asking them how they will feed the multitude. When they despair of feeding the crowd using their earthly resources, Jesus opens their eyes and hearts to His grace. He instructs the Apostles by multiplying physical bread to feed this crowd, in the same way that the Jews who followed Moses were fed with Heavenly Manna. This miracle previews the way in which Jesus will multiply simple bread to be **our** spiritual nourishment, His Body and Blood, as we journey through the wilderness of this life to the Promised Land, which is Heaven.

This morning, I want us to concentrate on what Jesus saw when he lifted up His eyes to see the crowd that had followed Him to the mountain. At the historical level, the crowd followed Jesus believing He would deliver them from slavery to the Romans. Even His Apostles shared that understanding. Physically, Jesus saw in that crowd a people who would follow Him without regard for their earthly concerns.

They walked into the wilderness with a childlike naivety. They didn't pack provisions, they didn't make preparations,

they just followed Jesus away from their homes, their lives, the comforts of their enslavement. That phrase sounds odd, doesn't it? But odd as it sounds, it is true. Slavery to Rome was comfortable. In exchange for submitting their identity and dependence to Rome, the Jews secured a measure of safety; regular meals, jobs uninterrupted, a place in which they could live, as long as they were satisfied with only the shadow of the promises made to them by God.

This group walked away from comfort of their slavery, and followed Jesus, trusting that Messiah would provide, and they were not disappointed. Jesus looked upon their necessity, and had compassion on them. He knew they would not make the full journey with Him unless He offered them sustenance, something to strengthen their bodies and their resolve. In exchange for the gift of their innocent trust, Jesus fed them, and fed them to overflowing, giving them more than they had even imagined to ask. He asks us to follow Him in the same way, giving up our comfortable slavery to this world, and follow Him to our Promised Land.

He also used this occasion to teach His Apostles about how they should act as the founders of Mother Church. It would be their job to step out in faith and grace and to feed His children, the multitude that would follow Him in the New Covenant. He showed them that they should be fearlessly charitable, willing to give even the last of their resources, secure that by the grace of the Holy Ghost, what seemed meager in our eyes would be abundant in the light of God's love.

Jesus continued these lessons on Holy Thursday. He showed the Apostles that the same bread which could be multiplied in the wilderness, could also be transformed into life eternal. These people who followed Jesus out of slavery and into the wilderness, would be adopted into His family, and through His bride, the Apostolic Church, they would be fed with the Bread of His very life so that they could be sustained on the journey through this world to eternal love and life.

Will Jesus also see in us the legacy He gave to His Apostles when He made them His Bride, the Church. Will he see as us cheerful givers. Will he see us courageous and faithful when it seems our resources are inadequate. Will he see in us the faithful stewards of His children, feeding them with what they need to survive this journey, both in physical need and spiritual nourishment, so that all those He gives to us can be raised into the fullness of His Covenant, His inheritance and His eternal life and love.

Like the boy with loaves and fishes, we look at the task ahead of us, the mission God has called us to fulfill, to be a guardian of the Holy Spirit within us, to care for our families through all our difficulties, to become great saints, and we are humbled by our inadequacy. Yet by grace, by the Bread of Life that miraculously feeds us, we too can persevere through our journey, make it home to Jesus, and become great saints ourselves.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen