

Matthew – The King And His Kingdom
The Great Adventure
Notes For Session 14 – Chapters 14 & 15: Miracles and Ministry

T1. Overview of the Chapter:

- A. How this Kingdom plays out in real life. We will see the Kingdom in action.
- B. The Feeding of the 5000 is the premier story in Chapter 14. It also in all four Gospels, Mt 14, Mk 6, Lk 9, & Jn 6. In all four Gospels tell us more than simply multiplying food, they point to the Eucharist.
- C. Remember how Catholics study the Bible; we look for the Literal sense first. And once we understand the Literal sense of Scripture then we study the spiritual senses (Allegorical sense – how it relates to Christ, Moral sense – how does it relate to my conduct, and the Anagogical sense – how does it relate to the future.)
- D. We are going to look at the Moral sense and the Allegorical sense – how does it relates to Christ.
- E. Matthew Chapter 14 begins the 4th Narrative follow by the 4th Discourse.

T2. Verses 1-12 deals with John the Baptist who was beheaded:

“At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the reputation of Jesus and said to his servants, "This man is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him."

The Death of John the Baptist.

Now Herod had arrested John, bound (him), and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, for John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." Although he wanted to kill him, he feared the people, for they regarded him as a prophet. But at a birthday celebration for Herod, the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests and delighted Herod so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests who were present, he ordered that it be given, and he had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. His disciples came and took away the corpse and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.”

- A. Why does this story take place here? Why does God bring us from the martyrdom of John the Baptist to the Feeding of the 5000?
- B. Part of the key is looking at the intricacy of Scripture and God’s tapestry. Remember the Gospel of Matthew is really a recapitulation of the life of Israel. Jesus is re-living the life of Israel. In the events of the Gospel we see back into the OT.
 - 1) Right after the death of John the Baptist, you have Jesus multiplying loaves. The key is looking back into the OT. The answer lies in who is John the Baptist. John the Baptist is the last of the OT prophets. He is the forerunner of Christ.
 - 2) The Jews believe that before the Messiah comes on the scene that the spirit of Elijah will return first. That is why at their Passover Seder they have an empty plate set for Elijah. Elijah will be the forerunner of the Messiah.
- C. Elijah was seen as the forerunner of Christ in book of Malachi. Jesus says John the Baptist is Elijah who is to come. Key is going back to 2Kings 2:6-11 (NAB) talks about Elijah.

"Elijah said to Elisha, "Please stay here; the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live," Elisha replied, "I will not leave you." And so the two went on together. Fifty of the guild prophets followed, and when the two stopped at the Jordan, stood facing them at a distance. Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up and struck the

water, which divided, and both crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask for whatever I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha answered, "May I receive a double portion of your spirit." "You have asked something that is not easy," he replied. "Still, if you see me taken up from you, your wish will be granted; otherwise not." As they walked on conversing, a flaming chariot and flaming horses came between them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

- 1) Elisha asks Elijah for a double portion of his anointing and he get it. And Elijah just north of the Dead Sea at the Jordon River, goes up in a whirlwind in a chariot of fire Elisha goes on to greater works than Elijah.
- 2) 2Kings 4: Multiplying of oil (vs 1-7), Raising of the dead (vs 32-34), and Multiplies loaves of bread (vs 42-44). Does that sound familiar to anyone?

D. In Chapter 14, we have the end of John the Baptist, who is Elijah who was to come. And where did John first show up – at Jordan just north of the Dead Sea. Right at the very place that Elijah went up in a whirlwind - it where John shows up – the forerunner

- 1) Right when John is beheaded, the very next miracle that takes place is the same miracle that Elisha did – the multiplying of the loaves
- 2) You see the comparison between of the Old and the New. This demonstrates the value of reading the Bible with the Church
- 3) **CCC112:** Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture". Different as the books which compose it may be, Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover.

The phrase "heart of Christ" can refer to Sacred Scripture, which makes known his heart, closed before the Passion, as the Scripture was obscure. But the Scripture has been opened since the Passion; since those who from then on have understood it, consider and discern in what way the prophecies must be interpreted..

T3.The Feeding of the Five Thousand (Verses 13-21):

"When Jesus heard of it, 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." (Jesus) 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.

- A.** Jesus has been teaching on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus has been teaching all day. The people are tired and hungry. Notice the disciple's solution. They are hungry – send them away to get something to eat.
- B.** Jesus says – You give them something to eat. Early Church Fathers talk about the Feeding of the 5000 as applying to the Eucharist. In John Chapter 6: 1-24 is the Feeding of the 5000 and Verses 25 on is Jesus' explanation of what the Bread was.
- C.** Allegorical sense – how it relates to Christ. Jesus tells us how the bread relates to Himself. He is the Bread that came down from heaven. He is the Bread of Life, He

is the Eucharist. Unless you eat His Body and drink His Blood, you do not have life in you.

- D.** This narrative gives us some insight into what God can do with a little. Remember it is after Chapter 13, which has just been describing the Kingdom. That the Kingdom is hidden, and the Kingdom is small. Now in Chapter 14, Jesus is demonstrating the Kingdom and demonstration happens to be the Eucharist. The most important thing in our faith.
- 1) Catechism tells us the Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our Faith. “The Eucharist is the source of apostolic zeal for the family.” Blessed John Paul II.
 - 2) Chapter 13 talks about hidden small things filled with parables about the nature of the Kingdom. The Kingdom starts small and grows a little bit becomes a lot.
- E.** The beauty of the Eucharist – the little bit we bring to Jesus. He takes that Bread and Wine and He does something marvelous with it. “What happens in the Mass in the Eucharist is the great exchange. We bring to Jesus bread and wine and it is transubstantiated – it is changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.” Bishop Fabian
- 1) We give Him our words in the Mass and Confession and we hear His Word given to us. The Great Exchange takes place at every Mass.
 - 2) We can also see in this narrative another aspect of the Kingdom – how a little goes a long way. So on one hand the Allegorical sense of the Feeding of the 5000 is that Jesus is the Bread and that He is multiplied to meet the need and the spiritual hunger that is out there in the world. The Eucharist is the food that satisfies the Soul.
 - 3) But there is also a Moral aspect to the story. How does it apply to me? The way the Kingdom operates – a little in the hand of Jesus is a lot. The little that you have, if you give it to Jesus, He can do amazing things to it.

T4. Jeff looks deeper into the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand

- A.** With these two pictures in mind - the Allegorical sense the Bread is the Body of Christ and the Moral sense that my gift of self to Christ, the little that I have, the talent that I have, I give to Him. And He does marvelous things with it.
- B.** Jesus says you give them something to eat. Come again – You give them something to eat. Oh, it’s another Teaching, He is going to do another Teaching.
- C.** We don’t have anything – Jesus says go and see what you have. We don’t want to go and look – do we? See what you got – take inventory.
- D.** Jesus takes the 5 loaves and 2 fish and says the blessing. “Blessed are you Lord our God, King of the universe, who causes bread to come forth from the earth.” Then He takes it and gives each disciple a little bit.
- E.** Point is to turn around and face the problem with the Kingdom of God with the little bit that you have and watch what He does – this is the Great Adventure.
- F.** Imagine facing the 5000 with just a little bit – you feel foolish. This is the nature of the Kingdom of God – fools for Christ. And we you run out, you turn around and go back to Jesus and He is standing there with more bread.
- G.** The idea behind the story is that if the little that you have is in the hands of Jesus, it is enough. What is it in our daily life that we have that we can give to Jesus? Jesus is saying to us – what kind of gifts do you have.

- H.** In our lives we can give Jesus the little bit we have and He can do incredible things with it.
- 1) In Mass we bring the little wafers of bread and little bit of wine – very little – we brought it to Jesus.
 - 2) When the Priest said, “This is My Body, This is My Blood. At that point in the Mass, the bread and the wine are transubstantiated and become the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and it is given now back to you.
- I.** Early Church Fathers used to teach that the grouping of 50 and 100 were like cities, dioceses, and parishes (groupings of people). And who are the New Covenant Priests (Matthew Chapter 12) – they are giving out the Body of Christ in the New Covenant.
- Examples in our life time: Mother Theresa and Mother Angelica.
- J.** Why Twelve Baskets left over? Twelve will remind you of the 12 Tribes. They were in Galilee administering to the Jews. In Chapter 15 is the Feeding of the 4000 with 7 Baskets left over. Why does Matthew mention this numbers?
- K.** The 12 Baskets left over has to do with the 12 Tribes of Israel. There are 5000 people and the number 5 has to do with the Five Books of Moses. Who is Jesus ministering to in the Feeding of the 5000 – the Israelites – the Jewish people.
- L.** The Eucharist is enough to feed all of Israel. All Israel needs can be met in the Eucharist, in Christ
- 1) In the Feeding of the 4000 in Chapter 15, Jesus goes into Gentile territory. He feeds 4000 and has 7 Baskets left over. The number 4 would stand for the Four Corners of the Earth. 7 the fulfillment or perfection (Covenant) for the entire world.
 - 2) In first instance (5000) enough is there for all of Israel – 12 baskets left over.
 - 3) Second instance 7 baskets left over - there is enough for the whole world.

T5. The Walking on the Water (Verses 22-33):

“Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.”

- A.** Jesus was alone again, praying, talking with His Father. What do you think He talks about with His Father?
- 1) **CCC2602:** Jesus often draws apart to pray in solitude, on a mountain, preferably at night. He includes all men in his prayer, for he has taken on humanity in his incarnation, and he offers them to the Father when he offers himself. Jesus, the Word who has become flesh, shares by his human prayer in all that "his brethren" experience; he sympathizes with their weaknesses in order to free them. It was for this that the Father sent him. His words and works are the visible manifestation of his prayer in secret.
 - 2) Want to know what Jesus was praying about, see what He said, what He did.
 - 3) Praying in morning about what, do you want me to do today? Our day should be a manifestation of our time with Him.

“When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once (Jesus) spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come."

B. Moment of Truth. Are we going to take our Faith and do incredible things for Christ? Or are we just going to sit in the boat and talk about what we know.

- 1) We can sit in the boat for the rest of our lives. I believe this, I believe that. Or we can be like Peter and say - ask me to come to You, and so Jesus says "Come."
- 2) Then comes that point of no return. Peter has to put that first leg up over the edge.

"Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how (strong) the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

- 1) Peter was only one who got out of the boat and knew it was Jesus. Moral of story – If you are going to walk on water – you are going to have to go overboard.
- 2) Jesus is calling all of us to walk on water – To get out of the boat. Trust Him! Do what you did not think you could do with your life. This is the nature of the Kingdom. Little things become great, if we will but trust Him with all of our heart.
- 3) So God is calling us to become Water-Walkers for Him. To do extraordinary things, where we would never be able to do extraordinary things.

T6. The Healings at Gennesaret (Verses 34-36):

"After making the crossing, they came to land at Gennesaret. When the men of that place recognized him, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought to him all those who were sick and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak, and as many as touched it were healed."

- A.** Remember about the Fringe of the garment (Mt 9:20) "A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel (Fringe) on his cloak."
- B.** Prayer Shawl (Tallit) and Tallit Catan- smaller undergarment with four corners with tassels (Tzit Tzit). Tied in such a way to as to represent the 613 Commandments of the Torah.
- C.** It was said that Tzit Tizyot or wings (four corners with tassels) of the Messiah will have healing virtue. That is why you see people reaching out for fringe of His garment. They reach out for the fringe of His garment and they were healed.

Chapter 15

T7. The Tradition of the Elders (Verses 1-7):

"Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They do not wash (their) hands when they eat a meal." He said to them in reply, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'Whoever curses father or mother shall die.' But you say, 'Whoever says to father or mother, "Any support you might have had from me is dedicated to God," need not honor his father.' You have nullified the word of God for the sake of your tradition. Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy about you when he said: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts.'"

- A.** How many have heard as a Catholic that we have added all this tradition to the Word of God? You nullified the Word of God with all your Catholic traditions. Here you can see that Jesus is against tradition.
- B.** But you know that Jesus is not against tradition and neither is Paul against tradition.
 - 1) 2Thes 3:6 Paul says that we should follow in the traditions that we have given you. Word Tradition means simply; to pass on.

- 2) In Catholic Church, we have big T (Traditions) – Eucharist, Papacy, Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity of Mary, and Liturgy. We also have small t (traditions) those can change. However, the Big T (Traditions) cannot change.
 - 3) The Traditions we have in the Catholic Church are different from what Jesus is condemning as a tradition. The tradition that He is condemning is called Corbon. As an example:
 - a) I am supposed to honor my Mother and Father by taking care of them in their old age. I have \$25,000 in the bank and they are going to be needing my help in a year or two.
 - b) I really do not want to spend that money on my parents, what I need is a 50-inch plasma TV. So how am I going to get around this law to honor my Mother and my Father? There is a way. I can take my \$25,000 to the Temple and go before the Priest and I can present that money as Cordon, dedicated to the Temple. Once it is dedicated to the Temple, I am no longer obligated to spend it on my parents. So I have found a way to get around the law with a tradition.
 - c) You have nullified the Word of God, by your goofy tradition. Jesus is condemning traditions that nullify the Word of God.
 - d) You are called to love and honor your Mother and Father and if your tradition allows you no to do that. Then that is a tradition that is condemned by the Lord.
- C.** That is a far cry from the Tradition of the Papacy. The Papacy is grounded deeply in the OT, and NT and 2000 years of history. No one can use this text to talk about how tradition is bad. Jesus loved tradition. Paul loved tradition.

T9. Conclusion

- A.** Jesus has called us to do great things. Chapter 15 ends with the great Feeding of the 4000 where He is speaking to the Gentiles. He has 7 baskets left over.
- B.** Verse 15:32-33: "Jesus summoned his disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, for fear they may collapse on the way." The disciples said to him, "Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place to satisfy such a crowd?"
 - 1) They just went through this and Jesus is giving them another opportunity. And He is going that in our life today. Giving us an opportunity to give the little that we have.
 - 2) Dream with for a moment: What gifts do you have? What talents do you have?
 - a) Can you breathe – you can give that to Jesus.
 - b) Just think what He can do with the little bit that we have. He can turn the world upside down.
 - c) Pray about what 5 loaves and 2 fish you have in your life and what God can do with it.
 - d) That is the nature of the Kingdom – Welcome to the Great Adventure! Welcome to this walk with Christ – it is the most exciting walk in the world.
 - e) Anyone who says the Church is boring – does not know what we know. They have not met the one we are following and looked into His eyes. They have never seen the miracles that He is still doing.