

# SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## LECTIONARY #110

### READING I 2 Kings 4:42-44

#### A reading from the second Book of Kings

A man came from Baal-shalishah bringing to Elisha,  
 the man of God,  
 twenty barley loaves made from the firstfruits,  
 and fresh grain in the ear.

Elisha said, "Give it to the people to eat."

But his servant objected,

"How can I set this before a hundred people?"

Elisha insisted, "Give it to the people to eat.

For thus says the LORD,

"They shall eat and there shall be some left over."

And when they had eaten, there was some left over,  
 as the LORD had said.

Baal-shalishah = BAY-ulh SHAHL-ih-shuh  
 or BAH-ulh SHAHL-i-shuh  
 Elisha = ee-li-shuh

Elisha is a man of God. He has authority and respect. Use the appropriate tone for one in charge.

Use a confident and satisfied tone. The Lord always fulfills what he promises.

For meditation and context:

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18 (16)  
**R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.**

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD,  
 and let your faithful ones bless you.  
 Let them discourse of the glory of  
 your kingdom  
 and speak of your might.  
 The eyes of all look hopefully to you,  
 and you give them their food in  
 due season;

The LORD is just in all his ways  
 and holy in all his works.  
 The LORD is near to all who call upon him,  
 to all who call upon him in truth.

### READING I

Through our Christian lens, we often see Jesus' demonstration of power over nature and the gifts of God's creation as proofs that Jesus is God. While they certainly do lead us to this conclusion, it is important to recall other miracles that God has worked through other people in Scripture, as we will read in today's first reading. Yet these other people do not claim divinity. As we reflect on the miracles in the first reading and in the Gospel, we are invited to consider what else God reveals about himself and our life of faith through these actions.

The Books of Kings are a theological interpretation of four hundred years of Israel's history (961 BC–561 BC). While earlier historical books described the way that the people's fate was the result of their own actions, the Books of Kings blame Israel and Judah's destinies on the kings and queens who failed to rule according to the standards of the Book of Deuteronomy. Today's reading presents a striking contrast between Joram, the idolatrous king of Israel, and the prophet Elisha who is zealous in serving only the Lord. The account is one in a series of miraculous deeds that include a multiplication of oil, raising a dead child to life, neutralizing poison in food, multiplying barley loaves, curing a leper, and locating a lost axe (see 2 Kings 4:1–6:7). Such deeds are possible because Elisha is "the man of God" whose allegiance is unwaveringly dedicated to the Lord and service to him. This focus on God is clear when Elisha explains to his doubting servant that it is the Lord who does the miracle and who will assure that there will be some left over. Elisha may not be divine, but God works powerfully through him,

READING II Ephesians 4:1-6

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

I, a prisoner for the Lord,

urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call

you have received,

with all humility and gentleness, with patience,

bearing with one another through love,

striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond

of peace:

one body and one Spirit,

as you were also called to the one hope of your call,

one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

one God and Father of all,

who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians = ee-FEE-zhuhnz

Paul's exhortatory reading uses a persuasive tone. Notice the trinitarian nature of the reading.

The virtues listed promote unity, the overall theme of the reading. Read slowly so the assembly can find virtues that apply to them. What do they already practice? Where do they fall short?

Emphasize "one" the first time and subdue it upon repetition. This will make the words that follow "one" stand out.

Read the name of the book distinctly. We are taking a short break from Mark's Gospel to read from John's Gospel for several weeks.

Gallilee = GAL-ih-lee

"signs" = miracles

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee.

A large crowd followed him,

because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick.

Jesus went up on the mountain,

and there he sat down with his disciples.

The Jewish feast of Passover was near.

When Jesus raised his eyes

and saw that a large crowd was coming to him,

he said to Philip,

"Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?"

He said this to test him,

because he himself knew what he was going to do. »

GOSPEL John 6:1-15

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GOSPEL

and in all "Flowing from baptism, the dispositions lead to unity and peace as the binding elements that will hold the community together against aggression, division, or arrogance. As the Trinity is united in a bond of peace and love, so too is the community.

The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and the feeding of a great multitude is the only one of Jesus' miracles that is found in all four Gospels. In John, the miracle serves as an entry point into a discourse on the bread from heaven and Jesus as the bread of life.

READING II

reminding us that by our faith, we cooperate with the work of God in the world.

Ancient Christian letters often combined theological insight with ethical exhortation. Today's reading from Ephesians centers all ethical activity within the context of baptism, even as it invokes the divine persons and extols the unity the sacrament creates.

Today's short reading can be divided into two parts. First, there is the ethical instruction, which summons the Ephesians to a life "worthy of the call you have

Read this slowly, with agitation. Make clear the impossibility of the task.

"Barley loaves" should ring familiar, an echo of the first reading.

This is Eucharistic language. Read reverently. Emphasize "Jesus."

Collecting the fragments was proof positive that a miracle had happened. Notice the concern for not wasting.

The narrator closes out the story. Jesus withdraws because the crowd still misunderstands who he is.

Philip answered him, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little."

One of his disciples,

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him,

"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what good are these for so many?"

Jesus said, "Have the people recline."

Now there was a great deal of grass in that place.

So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.

Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks,

and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted.

When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples,

"Gather the fragments left over,

so that nothing will be wasted."

So they collected them,

and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves

that had been more than they could eat.

When the people saw the sign he had done, they said,

"This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world."

Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off

to make him king,

he withdrew again to the mountain alone.

Today's account consists of two parts. First, the introduction provides basic information on location, persons, and motives. Second, there is a detailed description of the miracle. In the first part, John's introduction to the miracle is filled with unique and value-laden details, like the fact that the Passover was near, and that Jesus went up on the mountain (like Moses at Sinai). The detailed description has other distinctly Johannine elements. Only in John does Jesus point out the problem and know what he will do. Jesus' rhetorical question, directed to his disciples, echoes Moses' question of God in

the wilderness: "Where can I get meat to the wilderness: 'Where can I get meat to give to all this people?' (Numbers 11:13). The disciples' lack of understanding parallels the lack of comprehension and trust in God's power that Elisha's servant demonstrates in today's first reading. Moving to the second part of the reading, we are invited to look beyond the familiar story to notice how it employs a mix of realism (the number of people is enormous—five thousand men alone!), religious faith (they are sand men alone!), and Eucharistic memory of Psalm 23:2—"In green pastures he makes me lie down", and Eucharistic and certainly not for the Bread of Life that is come down from heaven. S.L.