

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

*Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 5 August 2018*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

Over the last few Sundays the liturgy has presented us with the image filled with Jesus' tenderness reaching out to the crowd and its needs. In today's Gospel passage (cf. Jn 6:24-35) the perspective changes. The crowd whose hunger Jesus has satisfied begins to seek him anew and goes to encounter him. But for Jesus, it is not enough that people seek him. He wants people to know him. He wishes that the search for him and the encounter with him go beyond the immediate satisfaction of material needs. Jesus came to bring us something more, to open our lives to a wider horizon than the daily concerns of eating, clothing ourselves, career and so on. Thus, turning to the crowd, he exclaims: "you seek me, not because you saw signs but because you ate your fill of the loaves (v. 26)". In this way, he encourages the people to go a step further and to question themselves on the significance of the miracle, and not simply to take advantage of it. Indeed, the multiplication of the loaves and the fish is a sign of the great gift the Father has given to humanity, which is Jesus himself!

He, the true "bread of life" (v. 35), wants to satisfy not just the bodies but also the souls, giving the spiritual food that can satisfy profound hunger. This is why he invites the crowd to obtain not the food which perishes, but that which endures for eternal life (cf. v. 27). It is the food that Jesus gives to us every day: his Word, his Body, his Blood. The crowd listens to the Lord's invitation, but does not understand its meaning — as often happens to us — and asks him: "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" (v. 28). Those who are listening to Jesus think that he is asking them to observe the precepts in order to obtain more miracles like the multiplication of the loaves. This is a common temptation; to reduce religion to only the practice of its laws, projecting onto our relationship with God the image of the relationship between servants and their master: servants must carry out the tasks that the master assigns to them in order to enjoy his benevolence. We all know this. Therefore, the crowd wants to know from Jesus which actions it must perform in order to please God. But Jesus' reply is unexpected: "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (v. 29). Today, these words are also addressed to us: God's work does not consist so much in "doing" things, but in "believing" in Him whom He sent. This means that faith in Jesus allows us to carry out God's works. If we allow ourselves to be involved in this loving and trusting relationship with Jesus, we will be able to perform good works that exude the fragrance of the Gospel for the good and needs of our brothers and sisters.

The Lord invites us not to forget that, if it is necessary to worry about bread, it is even more important to nurture our relationship with Him, to strengthen our faith in Him, who is the "bread of

life" who came to satisfy our hunger for truth, our hunger for justice and our hunger for love. On the day in which we remember the dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major in Rome, may the Virgin Mary, the *Salus Populi Romani*, support us in our journey of faith and help us to joyfully surrender ourselves to God's design for our lives.

After the recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Father added:

Dear brothers and sisters, 40 years ago, Blessed Paul vi was living his last hours on this earth. In fact he died on 6 August 1978. We remember him with much veneration and gratitude as we await his Canonization on 14 October. May he intercede from the heavens for the Church whom he loved so much and for peace in the world. Let us salute this great Pope of modernity with a round of applause, everyone!

I affectionately greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims from various countries: families, parish groups, associations and individual faithful.

In particular, I greet the cycling pilgrimage from Velehrad, Moravia, Czech Republic, the faithful from Lorca, Spain, and the young people from Nòvoli.

I wish all of you a pleasant Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you! And enjoy your lunch!