

Being God's Partner Second Week of Easter Friday, April 28, 2017 8:15 AM
Acts 5:34-42; **Jn 6:1-15** (St. Peter Chanel, priest and martyr) (Life on earth is about growing in a mature understanding of what God is and how we become active participants in the work of God.)

“Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain alone.”

As in all stories the ending is really important, and the ending of this story of feeding the five thousand is that Jesus withdrew alone because **he distrusted the crowd, who had seen the signs**. Now the signs means first of all the healing of the sick. Secondly, the signs means the feeding of the five thousand. **They are signs of well-being, abundance, prosperity, and overall goodness; but signs can be misinterpreted.**

Jesus did not want to become king. He did not want an earthly realm, and apparently the people didn't really care what he wanted or even what God wanted; and that was the problem with his whole ministry. **The crowd either misinterpreted what he did or said or didn't care what he meant, but rather simply saw things and him in their own narrow sort of way.** And since they saw good, they figured, well that's the kind of guy we want in charge, and we will have more good every day, and we won't have to work anymore or suffer anymore, and so on. That was not the plan of God. That's not what **life on earth** is about. **It's about growing in a mature understanding of what God is and how we become like God**, not being passive recipients, but **active participants in the work of God**. That is Jesus' plan from the beginning, and he was very clear actually to those who listened, but they were very few.

Now it is very true that everything desirable is good. The word “good” and the word “desirable” are really equivalent terms. Everything desirable is good. But not everything good is really good. **Not everything desirable is God's will for us. It's our work to discern that.**

What is really God's will for us? What is the best for us? And this takes work. It's called the work of discernment. And **every believer has to discern**: What is God asking from me? How am I to contribute to the work of God now in my life, under my circumstances, whatever they are? Not: How can God change my circumstances so that my life is more pleasant? That is not a proper prayer or proper way of seeking. **The proper prayer is: What can I do for God?** What can I do to contribute something to the well-being of God's creation, another way of saying: **How can I be God's partner? This is what the crowds didn't ask.**