

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time - 02-08-2026

“Thus says the Lord: Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when you see them...”

A priest once instructed me that when giving a homily I should always give the people something to take home with them when they leave Mass. He suggested that I give them at least three things to do.

But I said to him. Father, Catholics already know what to do. We're really good at doing good deeds – feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.

The problem today is that most Catholics really don't know why they do what they do.

I mean, what's the difference between a Catholic doing a good deed verses an atheist doing the same good deed?

It certainly feels good to do something nice for someone and hopefully it makes them feel better as well.

But you see charity can't just be something we do because it makes us feel good. Nor can it be something we do just to make someone else feel good.

But on the other hand, we can't do it just because it's the right thing to do.

There is nothing wrong with feeling good when we do a good deed and if something is the right thing to do then of course we should do it but none of that should be our primary motivation.

If that were the case then there would be absolutely no difference between a Catholic sharing his bread with the hungry and an atheist doing the same?

It would simply be a finite act done in time and a finite act receives a finite reward. A good deed naturally makes everybody feel good but that's it. If it is done for any of the above reasons alone, it will ultimately die with the doer.

Someone once said to Mother Teresa, "Mother, I wouldn't do what you do for all the money in the world." To that she responded, "Neither would I." She knew exactly why she did what she did.

She did everything in union with Jesus for Jesus and each one of us is called to do the same.

We need to be imitators of Christ. We need to put on Christ and let Christ, who is the light of the world, shine in us and then through us.

However, in order to accomplish this, we must continually die to ourselves, "always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest...in our mortal flesh."

Like we heard in the second reading today, "We must resolve to know nothing...except Christ, and him crucified."

Jesus lived a life of total self-denial in order to save us; we too must follow in His footsteps that He may live in us and we in Him.

So what is the difference between a Catholic sharing his bread with the hungry verses an atheist doing the same?

The difference should be infinite.

When it is united to Christ, who is the light that never dims, His light shines in us and we become another Christ.

And then we participate in the salvation of the world and we fulfill his words from the gospel today. We are the light of the world.

Our good deeds are not meant to be finite acts in time that die with us but infinite acts that echo unto eternity for the salvation of the world.

So, yeah, let's share our bread with the hungry, let's shelter the oppressed and the homeless and clothe the naked when we see them but let's do it in union with Jesus and bring the light of Christ to the whole world for the salvation of every soul.