



**This week meditations on liturgical texts  
from **Skynia Magazine****

**August 15 - 21**  
**The Julian calendar**

**Content**

<b><u>Stages of meditation</u></b>	<b>2</b>
<b><u>August 15</u></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><u>August 16</u></b>	<b>7</b>
<b><u>August 17</u></b>	<b>11</b>
<b><u>August 18</u></b>	<b>15</b>
<b><u>August 19</u></b>	<b>19</b>
<b><u>August 20</u></b>	<b>23</b>
<b><u>August 21</u></b>	<b>27</b>
<b><u>What is Skynia Magazine?</u></b>	<b>31</b>

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## Stages of meditation

Please find below some schematic prompts for each stage of the meditation on the Word of God. [Read more.](#)

### 1. Reading

- Read the text
- What does it tell by itself?
- Clear up the context
- Look up the comments
- Find the key-phrase

### 2. Meditation

- What is my here and now?
- What does the Word tell me?
- Use your imagination
- "Digest" the text
- The Word and my life

### 3. Prayer

- What will I say in response?
- Recognition and request
- Gratitude and glorifying
- Prayer in the Word
- My participation in the Divine Liturgy

### 4. Contemplation

- A call to conversion
- Now I am silent
- Staying in the presence of God
- Now He is guiding me

## Biblical readings and meditations

August 15

Sunday 8

1 Corinthians 1: 10-18

Matthew 14: 14-22

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power. For the message about the cross is foolishness to those

who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

### **Matthew 14: 14-22**

When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

### **Meditation**

Today the Word of God reminds us of the event when Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed the people who followed Him to a deserted and solitary place.

Why did *five thousand men, besides women and children*, stay so late in a deserted place where it was impossible to find or buy any

food? Probably, because their need for the spiritual food that Christ gave them was greater than the temporary physical hunger.

*They need not go away; you give them something to eat,* - Jesus addresses the disciples, who ask Him to send the crowds away, because they are hungry. Christ knows all the needs of these people; in addition to the spiritual nourishment and healing their ailments, He gives them bodily nourishment.

*All ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.* Jesus does not give food only to the weakest and to those who have lost their strength; the Lord wants to feed all who have come to Him. Jesus does not quench the hunger of the crowds only in part; everyone ate *and were filled*, and there was still enough bread left. Apparently, only those who did not want to accept the bread that Christ gave could remain hungry. The Lord is generous, His blessings for us never end, His gifts will suffice for all. He can satisfy any hunger; He can give us much more than we hope for, but we are not always able to accept it.

To feed the people, Jesus uses His disciples: *Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.* Through the hands of His disciples, Christ nourishes the crowds.

In this meal one can recognise the prototype of the Eucharist. At the Last Supper with the apostles, *Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

(Luke 22:19). Today Christ does not want us to be hungry and leave Him. Every day through the hands of the priests, Christ gives us His food. His Body and Blood are for everyone.

## August 16

### Monday

**1 Corinthians 11:31 - 12:6**

**Matthew 18: 1-11**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### **1 Corinthians 11:31 - 12:6**

Brethren, but if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of

activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

### **Matthew 18: 1-11**

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

“If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.

“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.



## Meditation

Today the Word of God calls us to be resolute in temptations. When my hand, foot, or eye tempts me, causing me or others to fall, it is better for me to lose them, but not to sin. Jesus assures us that it is better *to enter life*, that is, the kingdom of God (cf. Mark 9:47), maimed, than *to be thrown into the hell of fire* with both hands, feet, and eyes.

Apparently, Jesus did not mean only certain parts of our body. Can our hand steal itself, can our feet lead us to something evil, can our eyes admire something sinful by themselves? Bad intentions and desires arise deep in our hearts and minds. The eye, the foot, or the hand alone do not decide anything, they submit to our mind and will, and, in response to our consent to sin, complete the fall.

What can be that part of ourselves that we need to get rid of? The opportunity to compromise with sin for one's own benefit; an offer to work dishonestly, but to live in abundance; consent to live in sin in order to keep up with the times; fear of acknowledging one's own Christianity so as not to differ from others and not to be ridiculed; desire to have power, but to follow illegal instructions of others...

Healthy people can only imagine how much pain people suffer from the loss or injury of a certain part of their body, how difficult it is to live in a society without eyes, arms or legs. Christ also understood this; we know many examples when Jesus restored the sight, healed the paralyzed and those with withered hands. Apparently, the same suffering a person can experience in the fight against temptation, in trying to tear off something that can cause a fall. Jesus understands

this, and today He assures us that it is better to experience the pain of such a loss than some pleasant moments that we think sin can bring, but in fact it thrown us into hell.

Today we hear the words: *Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks!* But we also hear other words: *Occasions for stumbling are bound to come...* Temptations can cause me to fall or grow; they can destroy me, but they can also lead me to the kingdom of God. Let us ask the Lord for the grace of endurance in temptations and courage in fighting with them.

**August 17**

**Tuesday**

**1 Corinthians 12: 12-26**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**Matthew 18: 18-22; 19: 1-2,  
13-15**

**1 Corinthians 12: 12-26**

Brethren, for just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the members of the body

that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

**Matthew 18: 18-22; 19: 1-2, 13-15**

And the Lord said: "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times."

When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. Large crowds followed him, and he cured them there.

Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to

those who brought them; but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

### **Meditation**

In the Gospel there are such pages that must overflow us with thoughts and emotions. But our eyes have become so inattentive and our hearts have become so sluggish that we aren't even able to comprehend the greatness and beauty of the Word of Jesus. Let's try to read this passage from the Gospel as if for the first time. Let's marvel at every word of the Teacher.

There is a question of Peter, who wants to know the fundamentals of forgiveness. Who knows, maybe Peter has just had an argument with somebody or has a problem, so he wants to make sure that he has done everything right. That's why he asks for Master's advice. In those days, rabbinical precepts advised that a person could forgive his/her neighbour a maximum of three times. So, what Peter suggests goes far beyond that – it is more than twice as generous as the usual order. But Jesus, as always, goes even further ... Not seven, but seventy-seven times. That means, - always.

I can only imagine Peter's face. I smile involuntarily when I think of what a storm was going on in his head ...

What Jesus advises is, of course, paradoxical and is inspired by God's example of forgiveness. Here is the point: we must always forgive, because God always forgives us. God's forgiveness is the

motive and model of brotherhood that must exist in any Christian community.

Today we also meet children. We are called to become like children in order to get to know tenderness and be able to forgive and live by forgiveness. It takes a child's heart to learn to marvel at the great things the Lord continues to do inside of us. If we become like children, if we allow the most real and spontaneous part of our soul to grow, with its ability to dream, experience and believe, then we will be able to easily approach Jesus and come through Him to God. The Lord blesses us, lays His hands on us, invites us to receive His kingdom. Children along with the widows and the poor were the category of the weak in Jewish society. They were ignored and were invisible, but they occupied a special place in the heart of God. Let our inner child grow. This child puts the kingdom into action inside of us and knows how to recognize the presence of God in everything that will help us to learn to always forgive.

**August 18**

**Wednesday**

**1 Corinthians 13:4 - 14:5**

**Matthew 20: 1-16**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### **1 Corinthians 13:4 - 14:5**

Brethren, love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to

other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit. On the other hand, those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. Those who speak in a tongue build up themselves, but those who prophesy build up the church. Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

### **Matthew 20: 1-16**

And the Lord said: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they



grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

### **Meditation**

Jesus has just finished talking to a rich young man. He approves of his efforts to keep the commandments, but then watches as he goes away grieving, because he cannot take the next step: leave his wealth and follow Jesus. By this example, Jesus assures the disciples that he who has the courage to leave everything will receive a hundred times more on earth and in eternal life.

What riches are we talking about? Wealth can be material and spiritual, thus outlining those *things* to which our hearts are attached and which do not allow us to be ready to follow Jesus.

Today's Gospel speaks of one of the spiritual riches that prevents us from accepting God's gift. It is about the wealth of those who consider themselves to be *the first*. These are the laborers who work in the vineyard from the early hour. These are the ones who complain about the landowner, because they are hindered by his generosity, which contrasts with their worldview, according to which everything you take should be properly evaluated.

This way of thinking is a great obstacle to spiritual growth, because according to it we take God's gifts for granted – as a compensation for our efforts, payment for our work. Thus, we lose our filial relationship with God and feel like *the eldest son* from the Gospel parable by Luke, who felt like a slave serving his father. If we perceive life from the standpoint of a slave, we will not be able to see the benefits of working from the early hour, that is, how from the very beginning the Father sees all our struggles and difficulties of life.

Yet, as in today's Gospel, the Lord keeps His promise to the laborers who worked from the early morning. But if we feel envy for those who have lived a sinful life and are worthy of the same honors, we ourselves will cease to be worthy of God's gift and will not see Him distribute His love to everyone. In this sense, the last will be first, because the last are those who do not claim on everything, they are *poor in spirit*, able to accept the gift of God's kingdom: love as a free gift from God.

**August 19**

**Thursday**

**The Holy Transfiguration of  
Our Lord, God and Savior  
Jesus Christ**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**2 Peter 1: 10-19**

**Matthew 17: 1-9**

**2 Peter 1: 10-19**

Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory

from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

### **Matthew 17: 1-9**

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

## Meditation

*His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white.*

On Mount Tabor, while praying, Peter, James, and John see the transfiguration of Christ; Jesus shows His closest disciples His divine nature. Three future apostles become witnesses to Christ's greatness; they see Jesus receiving honor and glory from God the Father: *This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!* The disciples experience a moment of what Jesus promised when He met Nathanael: *Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man* (John 1:51). Peter, James, and John experience the reflection of what awaits them in the kingdom of Heaven.

The disciples not only see the transfiguration of Christ and hear the voice of God the Father from the cloud, but, perhaps, with all their being, as far as they can accept it, experience this transformation; the Spirit of the Lord touches their spirit. *Lord, it is good for us to be here!* – Peter responds confused and frightened to Jesus.

To see the glory of the Lord and be partakers of it in eternity, the apostles need to come down from Mount Tabor, return to the world, work hard, suffer persecution, and even martyrdom. The moment of experiencing the divine nature of Christ helped the disciples to experience the suffering and death of their Master as well as their own persecutions as they were spreading Christ's teaching. They didn't despair, for they knew, as Peter the apostle says, that they proclaimed the power and coming of the Lord Jesus

Christ not by *cleverly devised myths*, but they had been *eyewitnesses of his majesty*.

As we reflect today on the event of the transfiguration of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, we ask for His light. The light that would transform us, show the truth about ourselves, reveal the truth about God, add strength and endurance in times of suffering and trial, help us to remain faithful to Christ.

**August 20**

**Friday**

**1 Corinthians 14: 26-40**

**Matthew 21: 12-14, 17-20**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**1 Corinthians 14: 26-40**

Brethren, what should be done then, my friends? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to someone else sitting nearby, let the first person be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, for God is a God not of disorder but of peace.

(As in all the churches of the saints, women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a

woman to speak in church. Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?)

Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. So, my friends, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done decently and in order.

### **Matthew 21: 12-14, 17-20**

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers." The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?"



## Meditation

Jesus loved the Temple in His life. He often came back there in His adult life. In the days of his Passion, not hiding His nostalgia, He answers His tormentors: *Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me* (Matthew 26:55). But once, as it is described in today's Gospel, it went over the top. On entering the Temple He started *driving out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves, He said to them, "It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of robbers"*.

*Inside and beyond churches, and even more – inside and beyond dismissal sanctuaries, this dangerous impression was nested as a spider that God, faith, grace ended up at the seller's counters. The Home of the Father! This beautiful radiance of unselfishness (...) was brought down to the exchange of things. The danger of the exchange of things, and not feelings of the heart, is not something make-believe. You made such gestures, said such words, gave such sacrifice, did the prescribed. And it's not important if everything was done in ungenerously – you paid your debt to God, bought God. Faith has been narrowed down to the market (Alessandro Casati).*

But Jesus did not arrive to bring people to the Temple, calling them to the inside, but to bring the Temple, that is God's presence, into everybody's heart. Certainly, one should pay tribute to the symbolic importance of the Jewish Temple and the beauty leading us into the divine, that many our churches are distinguished for. But this should not be brought down to an absolute. The relationship with God is

established at the highest meeting in prayer and acceptance of the rejected. The relationship with God has changed, it goes further than just a set of gestures or things that need to be sacrificed. The relationship is established through mutual recognition of the testament, hopes, the need for communion and peace, recognition, nostalgia for the unity of all peoples, brave heading for freedom. As poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote: *an individual is a temple the dome of which you can never see*. Maybe, that is also the case with our God, the most beautiful and the largest temple of our heart?

## August 21

### Saturday

#### Romans 14: 6-9

#### Matthew 15: 32-39

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

#### Romans 14: 6-9

Brethren, those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

#### Matthew 15: 32-39

Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." The disciples said to him, "Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?" Jesus asked them, "How many loaves have you?" They

said, "Seven, and a few small fish." Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

### **Meditation**

I have just imagined this picture from today's reading of the Gospel: four thousand men, besides women and children, staying for three days in the desert ... Not somewhere in a nice location, under the shade of trees, in a nice and pleasant atmosphere. But Jesus chose that location, and all this large crowd followed Him. *After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them* (Matthew 15: 29-30).

Why was such atmosphere necessary? For me today this looks as follows: I have turned off TV, left the Internet, switched off the music. And here it is! Finally, silence! Finally, Jesus can speak, heal, and finally feed people. With Himself. And nothing will be distracting and preventing me from this.

Now a couple of ideas after my desert and stay with Jesus. The first

thing that dawns on me is the Last Supper, when Jesus broke the bread, that is Himself. I come to think of the Eucharist where Jesus satisfies our hunger with Himself. And also the Church since there was a crowd of people in that desert. Sometimes most people expect that there will be holy people in the Church, the people who are emotionally and spiritually healthy, who help everyone, love everyone. And here we can see the Church with many people, and there are many maimed, lame, blind, mute, and others among them ... Not an ideal company. To what category out of these ones do me and you include ourselves? And Jesus gathers such company since these people need Him.

*And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full (Matthew 15:37).*

God is generous, He feeds and gives more than what is necessary. Let us note that number 7 is mentioned two times. Seven loaves of bread, seven baskets. I have got the following association here. Besides the fact that Jesus presents us with Himself in bread, He leaves us seven baskets full – *seven gifts of the Holy Spirit*. If we consume them and satisfy our hunger from the hands of Jesus and His disciples, we will definitely have those seven baskets left.

Jesus Christ, I am asking You: let us enter the desert today to hear Your Word, to feel the touch of Your healing hands, and to satisfy the hunger of our hearts with You. Amen.

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