

Where does your mind go when you hear this Gospel? Quite possibly to the Eucharist, the Mass. It's a beautiful description of what happens at Mass. Hungry people gather, that is you and I. We are hungering for bread, real bread that will feed our deepest hungers. And then there is the feeding. We are fed with the Bread of Life, the Body and Blood of Christ. We are strengthened by Jesus Himself for the great journey of life.

But my mind goes in another direction as well. Frequently the images of starving babies appear on our T.V. screens. I cringe as I watch skin and bone babies suck at their mother's empty breasts. I feel guilty and angry and sad. I ask myself, how can we allow these children to die, starve to death right before our eyes in a world filled with abundant nourishing food, and we ourselves are well fed? Over and over again we are assured there is plenty of food on our earth.

At present it is estimated that there are more than 820 million starving people in our world. 21,000 die each day from starvation. Meanwhile the U.S. military budget is 718 billion dollars annually. It would take about 3% of our military budget, 30 billion dollars, to end world hunger.

Think of Jesus' words in today's Gospel "give them some food yourselves". Is He speaking to us as well? Think of what He will say to us at the Last Judgement, "Come blessed of my Father, take possession of the Kingdom I have prepared for you. For I was hungry and you fed me. We may answer "When did I see you hungry and feed You?" and Jesus will respond, "Whatever you have done for the least of my sisters and brothers you have done for Me", or He could say "Depart from Me for I was hungry and you gave me no food".

There are many wonderful organizations that can help us fulfill Jesus' command, "give them some food yourselves."

My favorite is Catholic Relief Services. It is an arm of U.S. Catholic Church dedicated to feeding the starving people of our earth. During Lent each year we take up a collection for them.

A wonderful Christian organization which lobbies Congress to help feed the world's poor is Bread for the World.

There is an organization called Food for the Poor which feeds the starving people of the Caribbean.

The list goes on.

As we feed on the Body and Blood of Jesus each Sunday in order to feed our soul hunger so too we can give to the starving some food ourselves.