



## Marriage: The Multiplication of Love

Throughout his ministry, Jesus attracted a following of laborers, outcasts, sinners, and people seeking spiritual, physical, and emotional healing. With signs great and small, he prepared them for the Good News from the Father: “You are loved! I created you out of love and for love, because I am Love.” In his Passion, he fully revealed the depth of his love by offering his life to free us from sin, and opened the door to eternal salvation.

We get a glimpse of this love in today’s Gospel reading. Jesus saw the need of his followers—that they were hungry—and he responded in love. Taking the meager gifts the teenaged boy had brought, he made an offering of thanksgiving and multiplied them to satisfy the hunger of the multitude.

This miraculous feeding was a prefiguration of the offering Jesus would make of his own body under the appearance of bread and wine at the Last Supper. At that moment he announced, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you!” (Lk 22:15) He was expressing his yearning to give his life, his body, his everything to us—the Church

For us as Catholics, this is also the key to living the Sacrament of Marriage. Whenever we feel like our gifts are too meager, Jesus simply says, “Show me what you have.” Through this beautiful sacrament, as husband and wife we place our lives, our bodies, our everything into the hands of the Lord. God takes our gifts, blesses them like the loaves and fish, and multiplies the love of our marriage—through hospitality, through any children God may give, and through our living witness to God’s self-sacrificing love—to radiate love into the world.

**“A love that fails to grow is at risk. Growth can only occur if we respond to God’s grace through constant acts of love, acts of kindness that become ever more frequent, intense, generous, tender and cheerful.” – Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia, n. 134**

