

A century and a half ago, a group of ex-soldiers were working to build a sawmill on the American Fork River in western California. Their promised wages were \$1.50 a day. But while blasting away dirt from the new mill channel, one of the men saw a golden sparkle on the rocks. The year was 1848, and the California gold rush would soon start all because some workers found something much more valuable than what they were looking for.

Eighty years later, a Scottish doctor named Alexander Fleming investigating the growth of harmful bacteria was disappointed to discover that one of his samples had become contaminated with mold. He almost threw the dish away, but then stopped when he saw how the mold had stopped the harmful bacteria from growing. From studying this moldy sample, Fleming and other researchers eventually worked to produce penicillin which was the first of many antibiotic medicines. In that moldy plate, Dr. Fleming found something much better than what he was looking for.

Large crowds of people were looking for Jesus in today's Gospel reading. The day before they had received a miraculous meal from Jesus' hands: food for more than five thousand people out of a few small loaves of bread and some fish!

The people wanted more of the same so they went looking for Jesus. Jesus explained to them that although they were looking for him, they were not looking for the things Jesus had really come to give them.

The feeding of the 5000 was a sign pointing people to see who Jesus was as the Son of God. It was a sign to pay attention to Jesus and his words. But Jesus told them that they weren't really interested in that because all they cared about was getting their fill.

The people didn't really care about what Jesus had to say about the kingdom of heaven as long as he took care of their needs and on this particular day, they wanted more food like he had given them the day before.

Don't we sometimes make the same mistake as that crowd of people? Don't we sometimes go looking for Jesus, not so that we can listen to what he says, but simply to get what we want? Do we turn to Jesus in prayer only when we need something and then ignore him again as soon as that crisis is over? Do we do good works not to glorify God, but to get better treatment from others? Do we ever come to worship God, drop our offering in the plate, all the while thinking to ourselves, Well, now I've done my duty...maybe now God will start blessing me a little more richly after all I've done for him! Could our worship ever be that self-centered? Sadly, the answer is yes.

We are just like those in today's gospel. God has done everything for us and we stand back and ask for more.

God is the source of every blessing in your life. And it is Jesus who tells us to not look for him in hopes of filling our stomach or our bank account. Jesus' greatest gift to us is not the daily bread that he gives us so generously. It is the faith in him that he has placed in our heart; a faith that leads to eternal life and that is so much better than anything we could have been looking for.