

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Apr 17th 2015

In this second week of Easter, today's first reading from Acts provides nice inspiration for post-Lenten reflections. I am sure that like me, many of you made a commitment before Lent to either give something up or to do something above and beyond in order to enhance our relationship with God. I gave up desserts and I also recommitted myself during Lent to avoid gossiping or saying negative things about others and, instead, I do my best to speak up for those gossiped about. I say this because throughout Lent I had multiple temptations on many fronts. It was comforting to hear the words of our Associate Pastor, Father Mark, when he spoke about these temptations as Satan's attempts to weaken our faith. And surviving these temptations during Lent provides us with enhanced self-efficacy to withstand future attempts to erode our faith as well. Although the Apostles were flogged they did not allow their suffering to weaken their faith in God, but instead they became stronger in their faith. As we progress out of Lent and into the Easter season it is a good reminder that we should revel in our ability to work through adversity, temptations, and suffering as well, knowing we are stronger in our faith as a result.

Today's second reading tells the story of Jesus feeding over 5,000 followers. In particular, Jesus takes the paltry gifts of five barley loaves and two fish and through his works provides as much bread and fish as people wanted. This reading reminds me of the wonderful gifts that God gives us. Whereas I am certainly aware of my inability to perform miracles the lesson I take from Jesus' actions is that I must do my very best at maximizing the use of the gifts that God provides to us and preferably in a manner that benefits others. How many times are we given opportunities, but fail to take advantage of these, oftentimes, complaining about a lack of time or resources?

As we move into the Easter season, let us reflect on our enhanced self-efficacy and our ability and renewed commitment to do more with less. In doing so, we will have the humble satisfaction that we took God's gifts and used them to the fullest in our efforts to better human kind.

Michael Kavan-Creighton University's Medical School, Student Affairs