

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Weekday Mass – Tuesday, January 5, 2021
Cycle B

When I was working in the Archdiocese of Manila, I remember doing a mass in one of the chapels of the parish where I was assigned. In that chapel there was a unique image of a crucifix with a body of Christ with no hands and no feet. It is a crucifix which has become a popular religious fixture in many religious structures.

There is an interesting story behind that image. It was said that during World War II, many churches were leveled by the bombings, a pastor and some of his parishioners decided to sift through the rubble of the church. A parishioner found the crucifix but the hands and the feet had been burned away. They wanted to throw it away, but the pastor decided to use the crucifix as it was found. The next Sunday at mass, people were surprised to see the crucifix with the dismembered Christ, with an inscription below that read: “You are My hands and feet.”

Today in the Gospel, Jesus manifested the compassionate heart of a shepherd, Mark simply puts it, “Jesus saw the vast crowd. He pitied them for they were like sheep without a shepherd.” Jesus taught the people at great length. But He felt they needed to be fed as well. The Apostles wanted to dismiss the crowd, He said, “You give them something to eat.” Notice here that Jesus did not say, “I will give them something to eat”, even though it was He who will do the miraculous feeding. He said, “You give them something to eat.

He invited the Apostles to be His partners, His collaborators. He invited them to be His hands and His feet. Sometimes, we are like the Apostles – overwhelmed and discouraged by the task at hand. We ask questions like, “with all the evil and suffering all around, how can you find goodness?”

As men and women who bear the name of Christ, we don't actually wait to find goodness. We find goodness by creating goodness. If good is hard to find, then be the good, and that can be the start. Be the hands and feet of Christ today.

Amen