

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

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Take More

It doesn't matter what time of day we visit my mother-in-law — she always has food to offer. If we take two helpings, she will encourage us to take three. If we take three helpings, she will say, "*Coraggio* — take more." (She's Italian, in case you couldn't tell from the food-pushing and the language.)

When Jesus feeds the five thousand with the miracle of the loaves and fish, he does not produce *just* enough food to feed everyone who is there. He certainly could — that would be within his power. And he shows concern about waste, so it would make sense for him to do that. But instead, he deliberately overproduces. He creates more food than is necessary. He makes an abundance of it. Why?

I think it's for the same reason my mother-in-law keeps urging us to eat when we come to her house. Feeding people is not just a functional action. It's a gesture. It shows love. It shows concern. It shows welcome. Having an abundance of food — so much that there is some left over — is a sign that you don't care how much someone wants — you are ready to give whatever they are ready to take. You are ready to give recklessly. You are ready to give them not just all they need but also all they could want.

I think of this when I approach the sacrament of Confession. Time and time again I walk up to the door of that little room, a list of oft-repeated sins in my hand and a sense of shame on my heart.

Here I am again, Jesus. Back for more mercy. Hope you haven't run out.

He hasn't yet. He never will. "Coraggio," he whispers deep in my heart, "take more."

"When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, 'This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world.'" — John 6:14