Monday of the Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 14:13-21): ... When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.” ... He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied...

The "Bread" and the "Blessing" in the Eucharist

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
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Today, two quite peculiar elements of the Eucharist are highlighted. First: to institute the Holy Eucharist Jesus chooses "bread", because it contains the mystery of Passion. Bread presuppose that the seed —grain of wheat— that has fallen on the earth, "has died", and then the new ear can grow out of this death. The earthly bread may become the bearer of Christ's presence, because in unites in itself "death" and "resurrection".

Second, the "blessing". We are told that Jesus took bread and said the blessing (and the Thanksgiving). We are not to eat without giving thanks to God for the gift He offers. The Words of Institution are in this context of prayer; appreciation becomes blessing and transformation in them: finally, Christ Himself is the "bread of life" offered to us as a spiritual food.

—May you be blessed forever, O God of the Universe, because in the new "manna" you deliver yourself to us through the warm love of the Son.