

□ Reading time: 2 min.

After the First World War, in times of great famine, Professor Breitenbach, a famous doctor, had become seriously ill. Along with the illness came a general state of exhaustion. The attending physicians murmured about a nutritious diet and then, disconsolately, shrugged. In those critical days, an acquaintance had sent half a loaf of bread.

The professor was so delighted with the gift he received that he could not even eat it. He knew that his neighbour, a schoolmaster, had a sick daughter who was suffering from hunger. So he said, "What can I do with it? I am now an old man. It will be much more useful to that young life." And he sent the governess to bring the piece of bread to the schoolmaster's daughter.

The schoolmaster did not want to keep the bread for himself either, but decided to give it to an old widow who had found refuge in an attic in a poor part of town. The bread's strange journey was destined to have no end. The old woman took it to her daughter, who with her two children had taken refuge in a cellar not far from there. In turn, the woman remembered the sick old doctor, who lived a couple of houses away. She remembered that a short time earlier he had treated one of her children, who was seriously ill, without demanding anything in return. She put the half loaf of bread under her arm and went to the doctor's house.

"That is how we got it back," the housekeeper recounted. Once he had the bread in his hand and learned of its pilgrimage, the professor was deeply moved and said, "As long as there is so much love between us, I am not afraid of anything." He did not eat the bread, but said, "We must keep it and every time we act meanly, we will take it and look at it."

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. You can buy medicine, not health. You can buy things, not a family. You can buy togetherness, but not love. A book, but not intelligence. A crucifix, but not faith. Luxury, not beauty. A beautiful room, but not sleep. A luxurious grave, but not heaven.*