

## **REFLECTION FOR FRIDAY SECOND WEEK OF EASTER**

**Acts 5:34-42 John 6:1-15**

### **FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY**

The central theme of today's readings is that God takes care of our physical and spiritual needs if we put our trust in Him and challenges us to share our blessings with others.

In the Gospel we see this overflowing love of God in Jesus' marvellous generosity. To appreciate this, we need to consider the circumstances of the miracle. It's easy to reach out to others when it doesn't cause us much inconvenience. It is not so easy when a demand is made of us at an awkward moment. Here, a real sacrifice is involved. We have to set aside our plans and forget about ourselves.

So it was with Jesus. He had just learned that his cousin, John the Baptist had been murdered. He needed peace and quiet. That is why he and the apostles crossed to the far side of the lake. But when he stepped out of the boat, he found a crowd of people waiting for him. He might have got angry and sent them away. Instead, he had compassion on them.

Now, Jesus is surrounded by at least 5000 hungry people. Jesus and his disciples LOOK at the same crowd, but they SEE very different things.

The disciples look at these thousands of hungry people, and they choose to see....thousands of hungry people!

Even if they had sufficient money, there was no food shop nearby where they could buy food for them! The disciples look at the hungry people, and they see – a problem without a solution.

Then, the Apostle Andrew comes forward and says, "Hey Jesus, I know we need to make about 5000 sandwiches. Well, there's a child here with 5 loaves of bread and a couple of fish... but what good is that?"

Andrew looks at the small boy and his five loaves, and he chooses to see how small the resources are compared to the size of the need.

But Jesus looks at the small boy and he sees... someone he loves. Jesus sees a young man who is willing to give what little he has, even though it seems puny compared to the problem.

When God's love touches my smallest gift or my weakest attempt, something powerful occurs. Christ does not ask us to focus on how big the problem is – Christ is focused on the love with which I offer the gift.

He takes the five loaves and two fish, blesses it, breaks it, and... everyone was fed! And there were 12 baskets left over!

As the people went back to their homes at the end of that day, they knew that they had fully been nourished in body and spirit and experienced the goodness and love of God.

And this real miracle teaches us great lessons. What does this miracle teach us?

- + It teaches us that God's generosity is always greater than our needs.
- + It teaches us that God's faithfulness is always greater than our doubts.
- + It teaches us that God's strength is always greater than our weakness.
- + It teaches us that God's wisdom is always greater than our questions.
- + It teaches us that God's forgiveness is always greater than our sins.
- + It teaches us that God's life is always greater than death.
- + It teaches us that God's love for us is always greater than our ability to understand.

The little boy has very little to offer Jesus. There were 5000 hungry people – he had five small loaves of bread. If he had focused solely on how small his gift was, he would never have offered it.

But we are not supposed to focus on how small we are – we are to focus on how big our God is.

When God's love touches my smallest gift or my weakest attempt, something powerful occurs. Christ does not ask us to focus on how big the problem is – Christ is focused on the love with which I offer the gift.

If we have never trusted God with our time, our talent, our treasure...all our resources, then this is the time to start. Let us offer everything to God saying, "Here is what I am and what I have Lord, use me." And He will bless and amplify everything beyond our expectations. As we begin to give, we will discover that the Lord moves in where we are not adequate, and He abundantly supplies what is needed. When we give what we have to God, and we ask Him to bless it, it is then the miracle happens.

There is a tendency today to go in for the big gesture, and to neglect the small gesture. We may be tempted to think that because our contribution is small, it will make no difference. So we excuse ourselves from doing anything. But everything helps. Enough crumbs make a loaf. Besides, our example may trigger a response in others.

It's easy to give something that we won't really miss. But when the gift is as desperately needed by the giver as by the receiver, that is true giving. That is a sacrifice.

More often it is about giving of ourselves, of our time, our gifts. Giving things can be easy but, giving of oneself is never easy. Before giving himself as food and drink in the Eucharist, Jesus gave of himself to people in so many other ways.

Mother Teresa felt called to take care of the poor in India. The need was overwhelming. All she had to offer was her one, solitary life. How could she make a difference?

Well, look what God did with that one, solitary life! Today, tens of thousands of Sisters serve the poor because they are following Mother Teresa's example.

Mother Teresa once said "it is not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts."

We must give with joy-filled gratitude to God who has blessed us with so much. We need to be generous in sharing God's blessings with others around us.

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