

17 OTB.18; 2 Kgs 4:42-44; Ephs 4:1-6; John 6:1-15 ... *Let's do Lunch!*

First a story... A man was sitting in his living room wondering what time it was, when he heard his little son out in the kitchen. He knew there was a large clock out there so he called to his son, who was just learning how to tell time,

“Bobby, what’s the little hand on?”

After a short pause, Bobby guiltily replied, “Uh...a chocolate chip cookie.”

(Source: *Sunday Morning 2*, D. Clark)

Little Bobby isn’t the only one with his hand in the cookie jar: We’re all hungry, with the same hungers that made people follow Jesus 2000 years ago.

The question is: ‘what are we hungry for?’

What keeps us so restless & unsatisfied even when we have so much?

It’s not all that mysterious. What we hunger for is meaning and purpose.

We want to know what all our struggling and striving is for. We want to know that there’s **good reason** to do the difficult & hard things that life sends our way

... and to stay faithful and keep trying when the going gets really tough.

Without a larger purpose and reason for being, something bigger than ourselves, life degenerates into an absurd chase to see who can get the most toys before the grim reaper shows up at our doorstep! We’ve seen it more often than we care to admit, & maybe we’ve even lived it. It’s a pathetic substitute for a real life.

It’s a dead end street that’s cut off from the real & only road to the future.

Jesus offers us an alternative to this “dead end” way of living. In effect, he is saying to all of us: “*Your life has a purpose that’s bigger than you and bigger than all your achievements and all your stuff.*” My friends, what we were made for is communion with the Spirit who has always lived within us, & communion with all of God’s people. **That communion** of God, self, and the big human family, is the one thing that will never end, the one thing we can carry with us into the next life.

It is the one thing that can give us access to the future.

How does this work out for us?

How do we participate now?

Imagine for a moment that you are that unnamed boy in the crowd in today's Gospel, with **five** seemingly insignificant loaves & **two** scrawny fish. What do people expect from you? Does Andrew have to convince you to give up *your treasures*, or do you readily offer them for Jesus?

Do you stand on the sidelines, watching?

And what are you doing with five whole loaves and two fish in the first place?

Can you picture carrying all those? One could say he was wealthy.

In the developed world, it's easy to imagine having resources to feed ourselves, with leftovers. But, what does it feel like when Jesus asks

... if you are willing to give your wealth to serve others?

2 *Jesus *didn't* tell the boy to keep something for himself & use only four loaves or one fish for the miracle. **Jesus asked for it all.** And with childlike faith,

... *the boy gave, not worrying about going hungry himself. He trusted Jesus.*

Recall Elijah's servant's objection about 20 barley loaves, "**How can I set this before a hundred people?**" We hear the same attitude today: "*How can we possibly feed the homeless in our city?*" Elijah's servant isn't the only one who underestimates the power of what we have. **We, too, are invited to work miracles.**

Miracles aren't just history. They are all around us, right now.

Jesus distributed the loaves himself. Can you just imagine Jesus going up to each and every group on the grass? Or, maybe he invited that little boy to help him. Imagine Jesus taking a loaf & breaking it in half

... and asking you to go share it with a crowd of people seated *over there*.

He has given you meaning and purpose and destiny....

In this Eucharist we are celebrating together, Jesus will distribute living bread, to us. As you sit during the offering of the gifts, think about the people seated in groups on that Galilean hillside waiting for Jesus to distribute bread.

What does it feel like to know Jesus, himself, is coming to feed... you?

We read that Jesus "*knew what he was going to do.*" He would give his own flesh to us. I can imagine him breaking that loaf *as if* he was tearing off a piece of *his own* heart. Breaking it and offering it, not just as physical food, but as a deep gesture of divine compassion. His heart breaking with love for the people.

He now breaks *the bread* for us —you and me.

Then, he will enlist us to go and break ourselves, to give a piece of ourselves to others. ***If*** I have five loaves, Jesus is going to ask me for all of them. ***But***, what he gives back to me ... is going *to be worth my sacrifice*. Miraculous? Yes it is.

Much better than we can imagine. “***12 wicker baskets***”
Abundance. “***Leftovers ... as much of the [food] as they wanted.***”

See the little boy again as the 12 baskets are collected. And Jesus comes over to you, with a big smile, and says, “***Thank you. I couldn't have done this without you.***” Then he hands you a basket full of leftovers. It's much more than you gave.

(Source: *Celebration, 7/29/18)

At this Liturgy of Eucharistic Abundance, let us remember what has God given us to share — the real presence of Christ in our world — that's you and me, too.

Believe you are a miracle.

**And, let's do lunch ... for the world
(- there's plenty of cookies to go around!)**