

Sermon

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Isaiah 55:1-3*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *Romans 8:35, 37-39*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *Matthew 14:13-21*

From to-day's gospel reading we can see more into the character of Jesus ; What would you do with over 5.000 people in front of you with two types of hunger, corporal and spiritual? ; From the words

WHEN EVENING CAME we can grasp the crowd had been with the Lord for most of the day ; when you think of it that was a long day for all involved, for the disciples, the crowd, the sick and especially for Jesus himself, a demanding day to say the least ; On that very point how often do you and I pray personally for Pope Francis, now into his mid-eighties and not in the best of health?? "Excuse me Your Holiness, sorry to interrupt your busy schedule, but there's another 1.000 pilgrims outside who want your blessing before they go home, also they've invited you to have supper with them!!!!!!!" HELP!!!!

The role of the supreme pontiff is GRUELLING!!, as in, super demanding ; for those of you who watched the film "the Two Popes", in one particular scene, the outgoing pope Benedict 16th comments to cardinal Bergoglio "...before becoming pope I always felt supported because friends and acquaintances were not far, BUT NOW I'M LONELY.." ; The grind of the papacy certainly took it's toll on pope st.John Paul II ; not long before his death in April 2005 he was rushed to the Gemelli hospital in Rome, the best of medics assisted the ailing 84 year old ; Unfortunately instead of relieving his pain, they only added to it, he turned to them and said "What have you done to me?" ; perhaps this information has precious little to do with the Miracle of the Loaves, but it would be worth remembering that Our Lord, being human like the rest of us and thus prone to weariness, had to go thru' the grind during his few years in public ministry ; Is it any wonder that he lost his patience on certain occasions especially with the apostles? **WELL IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, THEN HOW ARE YOU GOING TO UNDERSTAND THE OTHER PARABLES** Mk.4;13

PHILIP, HOW IS IT I'VE BEEN WITH YOU ALL THIS TIME AND STILL YOU DON'T KNOW ME? John 14;8 SO YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE STRENGTH TO KEEP AWAKE WITH ME FOR ONE HOUR Matt.26;40.....PUT YOUR SWORD BACK, Matt 26;53.....THEN THEY ALL DESERTED HIM AND RAN AWAY, Matt 26;56, how's that for support just when you need it most?

The Miracle of the Loaves has a two-fold nourishment to it, Jesus attended to their physical hunger **THEY ALL ATE AS MUCH AS THEY WANTED, AND THEY COLLECTED THE SCRAPS REMAINING, TWELVE BASKETS FULL** ; but prior to this miracle Jesus had been seeing to their spiritual needs, He must have made an astonishing impression on them, which makes it easy to understand the words **MAN DOES NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD** ; slowly repeat these few words of truth and we recognize our need of God and spiritual nourishment, do you and I nourish our soul properly? A strange sounding question!!, and yet if our soul remains spiritually neglected something in us dies a slow death, and we remain all the poorer for it ; a sign of spiritual neglect eventually surfaces!! You wake up some fine morning and nothing makes sense, not even life itself "so why bother getting-up at all???" Sadly, that's the case of many people to-day, they haven't been attending to their spiritual sacred part, so something has to suffer, same as if you don't eat nutritiously, your body will become weakened, your thinking pattern will be distorted and life outside will seem painful to confront.

As believers our best spiritual nourishment is of course the Eucharist, strengthened by our private prayer, good works and perseverance ;

By constantly attending to our spiritual needs, as described above, we become friends of God, and whatever cross(or crosses) that come our way, then we can be sure of spiritual strength and guidance to get us thru' the unexpected ;

In the context of the gospel reading for this Sunday **AND THE SCRAPS REMAINING, TWELVE BASKETS FULL!!** perhaps we could hand in a few non-perishable food items into the box(s) reserved for food banks, you'll see these in the main supermarkets on the way out ;

These items, freely donated from conscientious shoppers, are sent on to food banks and distributed to families/individuals who are already running low on both income and nutrition due to the dire consequences of this Pandemic, which is far from over ; Praise the Lord and be grateful if you have something to eat every day ; here in the U.K. we are blessed with plenty to eat, and yet over 4 million struggle each day to get something to eat ;

Lastly, in the context of former over-worked high-ranking church prelates, surely you know of someone who is presently WORN OUT!!, just to look at them and see the tiredness in their eyes, pale complexion, weary and anxious, this could be a work colleague, a family member, a neighbour, whoever.., can you chat with them?, ask how things are!, give them a listening ear, relieve their burden even a little, tell them you'll pray for them (include homeless people also, the tiredness on their faces is shocking, pale for the want of nutritious food and tired because there's no place to have a proper sleep)

Stay healthy, God bless for now

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