

## 2/8/20 Trinity 7 (week 19)

**Hello to you all. Hope you have had a nice week, weather's perking up. I had a lovely afternoon in Crosby and a long walk. We took Tilly the dog and she never moved from her bed for the rest of the night!!**

**I hope you enjoy reading this weeks sermon from the Archdeacon of Liverpool Mike McGurk and am very much looking forward to seeing you next Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August, bright and early!! Rev Tracey  
xx**

It's great to be sharing with you today one of my favorite passages in the bible. Not sure if you should have a favorite, but when I was a boy, this passage spoke to me about giving God what little i had and allowing Him to work the miracle. This passage is known as the feeding of the 5,000 (yet we know there was many more than just 5,000 people) with only five loaves of bread and two fishes or I like to call them the 'fish finger butties.'

Let's put this bible passage into context - Jesus was having a bad day. He was pretty upset when his friends came to tell him that John the Baptist, his cousin, had been killed by King Herod. Jesus needed or wanted to have some time alone but the problem was that Jesus was very popular. People followed him wherever he went. It was hard for him to be alone.

The gospel passage tell us that it was getting dark, so his disciples came to him and asked him to send the people back home. As they didn't have enough food to feed them their tea (dinner if you're from the South.)

Food and hospitality is so important in the scripture and in our modern day life.

The question 'what's for tea /dinner?' was a regular question my brothers and I would ask as boys growing up – probably just after we'd eaten our lunch. Now, I've never had to worry about where my next meal is coming from, though I know many do. Eating for me, and I suspect for many of you is a kind of entertainment. Mealtimes are a time to connect with family and friends.

But, in Jesus' day just getting enough food (daily bread) was a struggle for most people. The 'what's for tea / dinner' question was a question of survival. It was a matter of life and death, people were starving.

God's miraculous provision of food for His people was a powerful sign and display of His love and compassion. It was a way of teaching his people, then and now, to trust Him. How much do we trust God with what little we have?

Jesus gave the disciples a challenge (I can hear the theme tune from 'Mission Impossible' playing in the background) with such a large number of people, He said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." (V16)

The disciples told Jesus they only had a little to eat themselves: "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish, v17 (aka – fish finger butties.)

With the problem staring them straight in the face (thousands of people in a remote place), they gave what little they had to Jesus. Jesus gave thanks and broke it, giving it BACK to them for them to share out. It's important not to lose the significance of this. It's easy for us today to concentrate on what we don't have, or how little we do have. Whatever we have is enough if we place it in the Master's hands. He'll make do with what we have and bless it, and use us to bless others (Rule of life – to give). What we consider to be mission impossible, to God is mission possible.

The passage says they everyone had there fill and were satisfied. (Stuffed) v20.

Next we notice he doesn't waste anything. "Gather up the fragments that remain so that nothing is lost." I often wondered what they did with the extras that were gathered but that's for another preach.

Twelve baskets of bread were gathered. The demonstration of the abundance of God, He doesn't just provide the bare necessities but provides us with more than we could ask or imagine.

Jesus used 'bread' as a metaphor for his own life. He said 'I am the bread of life.' John 6:35

Jesus is the bread that nourishes - It satisfies. It eases the pangs of hunger. It gives us the nourishment that we need each day. Sustains us and helps us grow.

Jesus is the bread we receive as a Gift – referencing the Old Testament narrative of the Hebrew people in the wilderness. Day after day manna would be provided on the ground for the people to eat. How easy it is for us to take for granted the things that come to us so easily, during lockdown many of us have had to re-evaluate our priorities. Jesus is the gift that makes life worth living. He is the gift that gives us hope in dying. He is the gift that helps us overcome guilt through radical forgiveness.

Finally - The hungrier we are, the better the bread tastes. - How hungry are you for Jesus? In Jesus day the people searched him out, followed him to remote places. How hungry are you today to be fed by him, led by him and to give him what little you have.

Jesus said (John 6:51 NRSV), ""I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Open yourself up to receive from Christ, play your part as 'we are asking God for a bigger church that will make a bigger difference' through the power of the Holy Spirit, bringing glory to the Father, following the way of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.