

Newsletter St Mary's and St Augustine's

8th Sunday after Trinity Sunday 2nd August 2020

Sunday's Readings: Psalm 145 8-9 & 15 - end; Isaiah 55: 1-5; Matthew 14 : 13-21

Wednesdays Readings : Psalm 119: 33-56; Ezekiel 33 : 21 – end; James 3.

Reflection by Karen.

This Sunday's gospel account of the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fish has never had more resonance for me.

Each Wednesday at St Mary's we have made up food parcels for nearly one thousand people in Sheffield – using food from Fareshares that would otherwise have gone as supermarket waste, as well as fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthy staples, bought using money raised by the flour we have sold or from donations on the crowdfunding site that was set up in partnership with Aviva. Towards the end of the packing on Wednesdays it often feels miraculous that the stock has lasted, and those last few boxes have as good a content as those we packed first.

Just as Jesus taught in last week's parables of the mustard seed and the yeast – God's kingdom works by taking the seemingly small and insignificant and using it to achieve great things. This week it is the 5 loaves and two fish of a young boy which are taken and blessed and broken to feed a multitude. At St Mary's it is the offering of people's time and energy, money and skills which are brought together to meet some of the current needs. And this is replicated within our church and local communities – people offer themselves to the kingdom of God, often feeling it is not enough or not good enough, yet God takes and blesses our offerings and uses them towards bringing in the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

The verses from today's Isaiah reading also call us to focus on the abundant provision of God, using the allegory of food and banqueting "come buy without cost.....eat what is good...delight in the richest of fare...I will make an everlasting covenant with you."

The words of Psalm 145 carry the same theme but tell more plainly of God's abundant character and provision for every aspect of life : "gracious, compassionate, rich in love....near.... hearing....watching over." All of this was then embodied in Jesus life and ministry, an example of which we have today. I was particularly struck by the opening verses – Jesus is trying to get away, to have some time to himself, to grieve the cruel execution of his cousin John by Herod, but the crowds follow him and catch up with him, and yet Jesus response is one of compassion.

Compassion is a great motivator for many people, yet we are also aware that we can very quickly suffer from "compassion fatigue". We almost become immune to images of families crammed into basic refugee camps, of rotting plastic polluting rivers and seas, of exhausted carers supporting

Sunday's Collect

**Lord God,
Your Son left the riches of heaven and
became poor for our sake.
When we prosper save us from pride
When we are needy save us from
despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

others, even of refugees drowning in the Mediterranean. We long for our small sparks of compassion and faith and action to be fanned into great flames – yet surely that is what this miracle and last weeks parables are teaching us – God takes what to us seems small and insignificant and uses it to the flourishing and abundance of the Kingdom.

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Beauty for brokenness
 Hope for despair
 Lord, in the suffering
 This is our prayer
 Bread for the children
 Justice, joy, peace
 Sunrise to sunset
 Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives
 Cures for their ills
 Work for the craftsman
 Trade for their skills
 Land for the dispossessed
 Rights for the weak
 Voices to plead the cause
 Of those who can't speak

*God of the poor
 Friend of the weak
 Give us compassion we pray
 Melt our cold hearts
 Let tears fall like rain
 Come, change our love
 From a spark to a flame.*

Refuge from cruel wars
 Havens from fear
 Cities for sanctuary
 Freedoms to share
 Peace to the killing-fields
 Scorched earth to green
 Christ for the bitterness
 His cross for the pain

Rest for the ravaged earth
 Oceans and streams
 Plundered and poisoned
 Our future, our dreams
 Lord, end our madness
 Carelessness, greed
 Make us content with
 The things that we need

Lighten our darkness
 Breathe on this flame
 Until your justice
 Burns brightly again
 Until the nations
 Learn of your ways
 Seek your salvation
 And bring you their praise



Notices

St Augustine's Church will be holding a simple

Communion service on:

Sunday 9th August and Sunday 23rd August at 10.30am.

There is an information sheet letting you know the changes and what to expect so that we can open safely. If you intend to come to the service and have not had a leaflet please let Claire know who will forward one to you.

St Mary's Church will be **meeting outside** in August:

THIS WEEK - Wednesday 5th August at 12pm a Socially Distanced Picnic – all welcome.

Sunday 16th August at 10.30am a short communion service followed by a picnic.

Sunday 30th August at 10.30am short communion service followed by a picnic.

There are no Zoom services during August now that we are beginning to meet together again.

Roots resources this week include prayers and activities for children and adults

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/i-am-looking-for/public-copies/worshipathome2aug>

Revd. Claire Dawson cdawson@blueyonder.co.uk 0114 272 4987: Day off Friday

Revd. Karen Cribb revkaren@stmaryschurch.co.uk Mobile: 07580 378507: Day off Tuesday

Revd Canon Mike West mike.west23@tiscali.co.uk 0114 266 2188

Revd. Dr. Ela Hall 0114 268 7002 elanutuhall@gmail.com

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