

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!

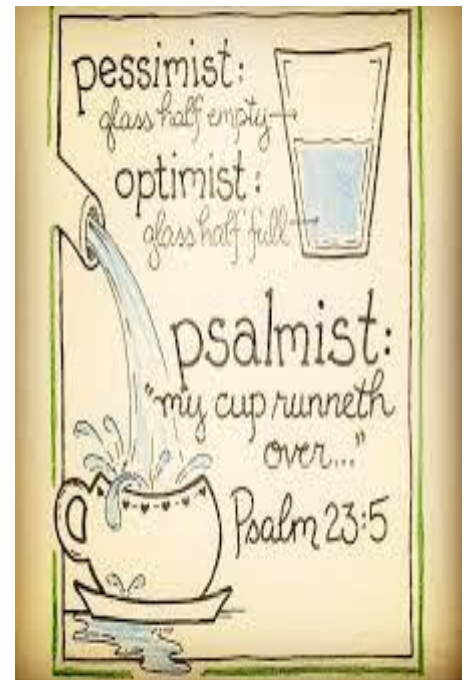
Shelter for fragile lives
Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsman
Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed
Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause
Of those who can't speak

*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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