

MESSAGE FROM THE LAP TOP

LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER!

Sunday Greetings Family of HNOJ:

The scripture readings given for this weekend (Old Testament and Gospel) highlight the extremely generous nature of an all loving God. The context of Isiah's message from God to the people of Israel, who by the way are coming to the end of a long period of exile, is to have confidence and trust in what He is going to provide for them as they now seek to regain their Covenant composure with God in returning home to what awaits them. Just to be able to hear God's message of fulfilling their hunger and slaking their thirst most certainly must have bolstered their spirits as this message of favor certainly cancels out the innumerable messages of alienation the people presented to Almighty God which led to their banishment in the first place.

The prophetic message would come to full life, via the ministry of Jesus, as we encounter in today's gospel the wonderful story of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Let's take a moment to envision the scene as Matthew paints it for us. Jesus has just received the tragic news of the martyrdom of His cousin, John the Baptist. He has traveled to a new location seemingly to decompress and make sense of what has just happened. The people who learn of His presence within their local are unaware of what has befallen upon Jesus. They are only aware of the wonderful blessing that has come upon them with now having Jesus "in the house." The people come to Him with many needs and seek His intercession. Jesus is heartbroken at the death of a dear compatriot in the mission of repentance. Justifiably, Jesus could have put the people off; He could have told them He was not up to any ministering for a while. Instead, He picks up where He had just left off and spreads the message of the gospel that He has been tasked to share.

Don't forget about His apostles. They are in the mix here and they are taking everything in. I am sure that they are beginning to worry as the session carries on well into the evening and dinnertime. As the session ends, concerned apostles are in a quandary; the people should be sent off to forage for provisions for themselves. Jesus tells His apostles something that we all need to ponder when He says to the apostles, "Give them something yourselves!" The apostles teach us a viable lesson since they did not "blow off" this directive of Jesus; consider that He must be losing it; no, they rummage around and find the five loaves and two fish to present to Jesus as proof that this could barely feed one family, let alone the whole crowd. Here is the heart of the scriptures for us today; the apostles rummaged for what they thought was the very limited they had. But, when they went to Jesus, He accepted what they came up with and multiplied it a thousand times.

The heart of today's message centers around a belief and trust in the favor of God to provide, even when we are dead certain that we don't have what is needed. At the beginning of this whole Covid-19 situation, I worried about our Food Pantry being able to handle the huge influx of people who would be needing assistance. Daily prayer and the family of HNOJ rising above the pandemic to keep a steady influx of donated items filling the basket in the church vestibule helps to make today's scripture very real for me.

Quick word in support of this year's Annual Cardinal's Appeal. We just reached our \$23,000.00 goal. 72 families have pledged \$23,190.00. I seem to recall that we had close to 90 families involved in last year's Appeal. Your pledge to this year's Appeal will now benefit HNOJ with rebate potential. Thank you to the 72; add your family to the number this week.

That is all for now. **GO FORTH AND ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD. MANY BLESSINGS FOR THE WEEK!!!!**

Fr. Mike