

01.08.2019 – Tuesday after Epiphany – Homily

I Jn 4:7-10 Mk 6:34-44

One of the most profound statements ever made about God is to be found in today's first reading, 'God is Love'. The reading also states that God showed he was Love by giving us the most precious gift God could give us, his only Son. If God is Love, the godly person is the loving person; the holy person is the giving person, the one who gives generously of himself or herself to others. The most loving and giving person, is, of course, Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

They asked Jesus to send the crowd away because the crowd were hungry. In response, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Give them something to eat yourselves'. Jesus was saying to them, 'Take some responsibility for these needy people, don't just wish them away'. He pushed them into doing something for the people, no matter how small. They eventually found five loaves and two fish, very small resources indeed. But with those few resources, Jesus fed the crowd.

Jesus was teaching his disciples and us that the willingness to do something, no matter how little, the readiness to give something, no matter how small, can bear rich fruit. The Lord can take our giving, even our little giving, and work powerfully through it. The gospel reading encourages us to be giving people, even when we seem to have little to give and the situation we are facing seems beyond us.

In this action, Jesus' compassion for the crowd was a revelation of God's love. Jesus gave expression to his compassion for the crowd in two ways, firstly by teaching (spiritual need) them at some length, then by feeding (physical need) them with bread and fish. Jesus, the revelation of God's love, always attended to both sets of needs; he came to serve the whole person, body and spirit. He encourages us to serve ourselves and each other in that same complete way that he served and continues to serve us.

Another key message is that God sometimes calls us to trust Him in ways that do not seem to be immediately practical and logical. The practical thing to do would have been to leave and acquire food for themselves. But the supernatural call of grace, at that moment, told this group of five thousand that they should remain with Jesus and trust that all would work out. And that is what they did, and it did work out.

Let us pray:

Lord, my trust in you at times is weak. At times, I doubt your goodness and your providence in my life. Help me always to trust more in your gentle invitation than in my own conclusions in life. Help me to become “loving person and giving person. Use me as your instrument to be compassionate towards the needy.

Jesus, I trust in you.