CELEBRATING AT HOME

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

We are fed that we might feed (Jn 6:1-15)

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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.
We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,
you are the Bread of Life.

Lord Jesus,
you are the Wine of compassion.

Lord Jesus,
you give yourself to the world through us.

Scripture Reading *(John 6:1-15)*

Jesus went off to the other side of the Sea of Galilee - or of Tiberias - and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he gave of curing the sick. Jesus climbed the hillside, and sat down there with his disciples. It was shortly before the Jewish feast of Passover.

Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, 'Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?' He only said this to test Philip; he himself knew exactly what he was going to do. Philip answered, 'Two hundred denarii would only buy enough to give them a small piece each.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, 'There is a small boy here with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that between so many?' Jesus said to them, 'Make the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass there and as many as five thousand men sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting ready; he then did the same with the fish, giving out as much as was wanted. When they had eaten enough he said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted.' So they picked them up and filled twelve hampers with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves.

The people, seeing this sign that he had given, said, 'This really is the prophet who is to come into the world.' Jesus, who could see that they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, escaped back to the hills by himself.

Reflection - *We are fed that we might feed*

Unusually, our reading of St Mark's Gospel will be interrupted for the next five weeks during which we will read the 'Bread of Life' passages from Chapter 6 of St John's Gospel. These passages form a kind of meditation about who Jesus is and what is happening when we gather for Eucharist - we are being nourished by Jesus in Word and Sacrament, and we are being sent to feed and nourish one another.

In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus fed the crowd, hungering for the Word of God, with his teaching. This week, Jesus also feeds the crowd with bread and fish. Once again, Jesus is deeply conscious of the human needs of others. Despite there being so many, not only are all fed, but there is food left over. In the story there is a sense of super-abundance.

When God answers needs and provides for people there is never *just enough;* there is always *more than enough.*

Seeing what Jesus had done, the people think they know who Jesus is ("the prophet who is to come into the world") and what his role should be (a king who will provide anything they want). But they have the wrong idea about Jesus' kingship. He isn't a national liberator, a political leader or a magician. So Jesus escapes into the hills by himself.

In next Sunday's Gospel Jesus will explain what this sign of feeding the multitude is really about.
As we begin this meditation on Jesus, the Bread of Life, our thoughts also turn to how we can be living bread for each other; how we can feed and nourish with the kinds of bread that do not perish: truth, justice, love,

kindness, compassion, honesty, integrity, faith, hope and forgiveness.

What words can we speak, what actions can we do that not only feed bodies, but which also feed hearts hungry for comfort, hope, forgiveness, justice, mercy, acceptance and love? How can we be the 'bread of God' in our world today?

The 'food' is entrusted to us. We are fed that we might feed one another.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for the whole Church.
Together may we be food and life for the whole human family.

Unite us in peace and love.
Bless our efforts to live in humility, gentleness and gratitude.

Be close to those who are ill,
and welcome those who have died into your loving presence.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Eternal God, you feed us with your Son.
May this sacred food, in Word and Sacrament,
help us grow into the image of Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
**and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
carry us gently through the week ahead.
Amen.**

Again this Sunday, the Gospel shows Jesus as a true shepherd whose heart is moved by the needs of the people. Feeding their hearts with the word is followed by feeding their bodies with real food.

***'To a hungry man, a piece of bread is the face of God.'
'There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.'***

Mahatma Gandhi

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.

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