

### 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 by 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 they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, escaped back to the hills by himself.

By his question, Jesus invites Philip & ourselves, to recognise our helplessness, our need for God & to turn to him in trust – for alone we can do nothing. Andrew turns up with the 5 loaves & 2 fish, a slight, insignificant amount. Here, size doesn’t matter - Jesus takes what is available & offers it to his Father and the multitude are fed. Let us use our talents and gifts, small as they are, in praise of God and for the good of our neighbour.

## SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Year B

28<sup>th</sup> July 2024

*Plenty of Bread for All*



Last week we heard how Jesus sought solitude with his disciples, but the crowds followed him and Jesus took pity on them – *they were like sheep without a shepherd* - and Jesus sets himself, not only to teach them, but also to feed them. It’s in this setting that the miraculous feeding of the 5000 takes place. To get the most out of this incident we pause St Mark's Gospel and for the next five weeks we will listen to St John, Chapter Six, a lengthy chapter made up of 71 verses. John refers to Jesus’ miracles as signs pointing to a deeper truth and over the coming weeks, John will reveal Jesus as the Bread of life. **“Whoever eats this bread will live forever.”** (Jn 6: 51) Let us grow in our knowledge and our love for the Lord, present in the Eucharist, over these coming summer weeks.

### Opening Prayer

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.

### 2 Kings 4:42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing Elisha, the man of God, bread from the first-fruits, twenty barley loaves and fresh grain in the ear.' 'Give it to the people to eat', Elisha said. But his servant replied, 'How can I serve this to a hundred men?' 'Give it to the people to eat' he insisted 'for the Lord says this, "They will eat and have some left over."' He served them; they ate and had some left over, as the Lord had said.

We dip into the Second Book of Kings, which together with Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel and One Kings are historical books telling of the history of Israel beginning with the reign of David's Son, King Solomon (BC 970) to the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 by the Babylonians. Although much of the material is of ancient origin, it wasn't composed until after the event, completed around 538 - the return from exile.

In today's short passage we hear how the prophet Elisha feeds a 100 men, in a time of famine, with 20 barley loaves. This reading obviously prepares us for today's Gospel – Jesus feeding the 5000.



### Psalm 144(145):10-11,15-18

*All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord, and your friends shall repeat their blessing. They shall speak of the glory of your reign and declare your might, O God.*

*The eyes of all creatures look to you and you give them their food in due time. You open wide your hand, O Lord, and grant our desires.*

*The Lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds.*

*He is close to all who call him, who call on him from their hearts.*

### Ephesians 4:1-6

I, the prisoner in the Lord, implore you to lead a life worthy of your vocation. Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all.

This week we continue Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Last week we heard how through the death of Christ, we have become a new creation. *'In his own person he killed the hostility'*, which kept us at odds with one another and separated from God. Paul now appeals that united in the Spirit, we should seek to live in harmony with one another.

### Alleluia, alleluia!

*Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life;  
you have the message of eternal life.*

### Alleluia!

*(Gospel overleaf)*

### Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the offerings which we bring from the abundance of your gifts, that through the powerful working of your grace these most sacred mysteries may sanctify our present way of life and lead us to eternal gladness.

### Prayer after Communion

We have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation.