



(silverlinings)

We take a breath and come intentionally into God's presence

The Lord be with you: **And also with you.**

We bring before God our lament for the week that has passed and our commitment for a holier, better tomorrow. Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

Holy Spirit draw us close and minister your grace to us, open our hearts and minds to all you have to say and show us this day. **Amen.**

Bible Reading: Matthew 14:13-21

Jesus withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Reflection

Many biblical scenes are set in desert like places they are often times of exile, deep reflection and revelation. Aside from Jesus' death and resurrection, this familiar miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000 is significantly the only one recorded in all four of the Gospels.

Theologian Marilyn Salmon suggests the real "miracle" is not so much about the multiplication of the food, but how Jesus' presence and actions blesses those who have come to him. Rather than being sent away to go and find their own food, they are invited to take a seat on the grass, to make themselves comfortable, as if they truly are Jesus' invited guests. Then in front of them all he holds the bread up to heaven and blesses it. This blessed bread is then distributed to all present, and you can't help but see an early enactment of the Eucharist.

Maybe they were expecting just a morsel shared amongst so many, and you can just imagine their awe when they look down and see there is still as much in the basket as before, generous amounts. People can have their fill and still there is baskets left over! From barely nothing, in Jesus' presence, all are generously fed.

It is notable that although Jesus could have dramatically said 'multiply' and crowds would have gasped as he performed the miracle and be in no doubt about his power. As is his nature it is not about use or abuse of power, indeed we see this characteristic most poignantly on the cross where he rejects all his angelic privilege to be the vulnerable, the abused, the discriminated. In a gentle, spiritual moment he holds the bread up to heaven and speaks words of blessing.

I wonder if you had been watching what you might have felt, and pondered on in the months ahead. And how you might have felt on hearing the news of his crucifixion and whether you would have felt that goodness had been lost..

But for now, you can just hear the crowds laughter and chatter as they share the overflowing baskets of nourishment The children would have been playing, maybe lifting the young boy who shared his lunch on their shoulders in thanks. In that moment there is joy and contentment. All is well.

May we all have moments of joy and contentedness this week. Amen

All Age Creative Visual

Take a piece of paper. Count the corners and put a 'k' for kindness on each corner. Cut off a corner and give it away (if you really want to go for it ask the member of your household you give it to what (realistic!!) kindness you can do for them). How many corners do you have now?! Keep going and let me know the biggest number that comes from your giving away kindness and make sure there is still a piece left for yourself, having given so much 😊



Musical Reflection

All I once held dear – by Lucy Gibson (attached)

Broken for you (with lyrics) – Evolsiay Tulip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CKOvHDObY>

Give me joy in my heart (Sing Hosanna!) -

BBC Songs of Praise St Norman Primary School & St Cuthbert's Choir, Carlisle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUd0VwMvCiU>

Prayers of Intercession *(based on Matthew 14:13-21 and Psalm 145:15-16)*

Loving God,

You are our Creator and Sustainer.

When You open Your hand,

You satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.

And so we look to You now in our time of need,

trusting in Your love and Your abundant goodness.

As You once fed the hungry crowds with five loaves and two small fish,
we ask that You would again fill those whose store cupboards and tummies
are empty.

Pour out Your Spirit on all who hunger and thirst.

Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.

Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.

We pray for communities where the virus is spiking,
where resources are running empty.

Breathe your compassion and healing upon them and break the spread.

Protect those who put themselves in harms way for the care of others.

We pray for those who are feeling at the end of their physical
and emotional resource,

Those who are lonely and long for companionship and love,

Those who are anxious, depressed or overwhelmed with grief.

Those who are sick....

We commend to your safe keeping all who have died,

and thank-you for those we have loved and for a short time see no more...

Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.

Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.

We pray for those who are spiritually empty,

who are troubled, but don't know where to turn;

who long for purpose and meaning, but don't know where to look;

who need You, but do not yet know You.

Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.

Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.

God, we praise You for Your abundant gifts in our lives.
Pour out Your Spirit on us as well.
Fill us with Your compassion and love,
so that we would willingly and generously share some of our
abundance with those who have need.

**Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.
Pour out Your Spirit, so that we may be filled.**

In this moment of stillness we lift before God the prayers of our own hearts

We commend ourselves and the whole of creation to your unfailing love. **Amen.**

**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 them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
In the name of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ Amen.**