

Reflections for 18th July 2021

7th Sunday after Trinity

What we offer

In the middle of today's gospel we find Mark's account of what we know as the feeding of the five thousand - the passage says 'five thousand men', which could mean that there were many more women and children as well. It is one of relatively few stories that appear in all four of the gospels.

Jesus challenged his disciples to feed the huge crowd that had gathered, and they could only produce five small loaves and two small fish. John's gospel adds the detail that the food had been brought by a young boy, and the gospels tell us that, as Jesus took that very small offering and gave thanks for it, and then began to share it, somehow everyone was fed. And it all started with the boy's small offering, and the willing but empty hands of the disciples, to receive and share the gifts.

So, as we reflect on that gospel story, we might ask: What is the most important thing that we could bring and offer to God today?

Could it be our prayers, and our worship together in church?

Could it be the money that we give –during our services, and in the many other ways that we give to support the work of the church, and charities and good causes?

Or could it be the offering of our time and talents, the gifts that we offer to be used in God's service, as we love and serve our neighbour?

All these things are good and important, but they can seem very small in the face of the needs and the tasks that we are called to – and they are very small, until they are offered to God to be blessed and transformed. The most important thing that we can bring and offer in our prayer and worship is simply ourselves, to be filled, renewed, blessed, and equipped for God's service in every part of our lives. The good news is that we can trust that God will take the small offerings that we can make, and make them fruitful for the life of his kingdom.

Revd John Waller

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,

the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;

for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you,

in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible readings: Jeremiah 23. 1-6; Ephesians 2. 11-22; Mark 6. 30-34, 53-56

Story: 'The Marvellous Picnic' (based on the accounts of the feeding of the 5,000)