

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A

One of the joys that I have setting in the Presider's Chair is observing the happiness that flow through the congregation. One of those special moments comes when our little ones get the opportunity to place some money into the collection basket. They know that when the ushers come to the front with the collection baskets, they get ready and can't wait to put a donation into the basket. Sometimes, children in the same family disagree over who gets to put the family donation into the basket. It's just that important to them.

Now this may seem like a small matter to some, and that's the reason that it escapes their attention, but make no mistake about it, this is one time that our children can teach us something about joyful giving. Now, I ask you to consider the following story.

"Taking the five (5) loaves and two (2) fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowd."

When we hear this story, we can help but have questions racing through our minds. Most of the questions will focus on the "how" of the miracle. Now it's not that the story shouldn't get us asking questions --- it should --- but not necessarily the "how" questions. Rather, the story of the loaves and the fishes invites us to ask one simple question: How deeply do I believe in God's abundant generosity?

Now as adults, when it comes to God, we almost have to unlearn the law of limited resources. For the things of God, the things that last, the things that have "true" value, these are the things that will never run out. His generosity has no bounds --- love, mercy, kindness, comfort, forgiveness --- this is the abundance of which I speak. Let me offer you an example: the cross. It shows us just how generous God can be,

and how he was willing to give up his life, for our sake. That's just who he is. The love of our God is overflowing with blessings and gifts for our well-being.

Once we recognize the God given things of this world are limitless, we will have a grace filled enlightened moment in which we are willing to share, even with what little we have, we will share with joy. Now for the child in the pew, mom or dad will always hand them something to put in the basket, even if it's a coin. For us as children of God, the same is true. God continually gives us what we truly need when we hold out our hands and our hearts in prayer and faith. His blessings will never run out and it is those blessings that allow us to share with others who need our love and help.

I ask you to recall this line that Jesus spoke to the disciples: "There is no need for them to go away". He is saying that very same thing to us; therefore, let us stay close to him so that we can also be fed by his abundant generosity.