

18th Sunday of the Year –A

Is: 55:1-3; Rom: 8:35, 37-39; Mt: 14:13-21

In today's gospel, we heard about the multiplication of the loaves. When Jesus saw the crowd, he took pity on them and said to the disciples, "You yourselves give them something to eat". To this command of Jesus, there are three reactors (Jn: 6:1-13).

The first reactor is Philip

He said to Jesus, "Six months wages would not be enough to buy bread for each of them to get a little – Jn 6:7". The reaction of Philip is that of a non-believer - a man who does not believe in any invisible means of support.

He is a man who does not look beyond himself. To the command of Jesus to provide, some food for the crowd, he looks at the crowd and then he looks at the insufficient resources. He throws up his hand in despair and says it is not possible. The fault of Philip is that he failed to look beyond himself. He was a man, who looked at his strength; he was a man who looked at his resources and concluded that nothing could be done. The scarcity of resources made him to be passive in his life.

History remembers only those who take risks in life; those who achieve something in spite of the obstacles. If we wait for ideal conditions to begin to work, we will never begin anything in life.

The second reactor is Andrew

The reaction of Andrew is a believer's reaction. He always had a special kind of trust in Jesus. He believed that even in the most unlikely situations Jesus would do something. Andrew always brought people to Jesus. He was the one who brought his brother Peter to Jesus. He said to Peter, "We have seen the Messiah". Then he led Peter to Jesus – Jn: 1:41-42. He brought some Greeks to Jesus – Jn: 12:20-22.

He was the one who brought the man with five loaves and two fish to Jesus – Jn: 6:8. Andrew was a realist; he knew that he could do nothing much with five loaves and two fish. But he was a natural believer in Jesus. He believed that Jesus could do

something with that little. And sure enough Jesus worked the miracle of feeding the five thousand men with the bread and fish. Jesus never lets us down. He will always reward our faith and trust in Him.

Jesus always works a miracle with the raw materials we provide Him. I need to provide my share of bread and fish. I can't sit at home and expect Jesus to work a miracle for me. Jesus never helps a lazy person. To solve any of my problems, I need to supply Jesus with my share of bread and fish: my efforts, although it is insufficient.

Third reactor

There was a man (third reactor), who supplied Jesus with the raw materials for the miracle. He gave the little he had- five loaves and two fish. We don't know the name of the boy. Was he a salesperson who came there to sell some bread and fish in order to make money? Or was he a boy on some picnic? We know nothing for sure. Although a boy, he was a generous soul.

When the disciples asked him to part with his bread and fish, he willingly parted with them. He agreed to lose something of his own, so that the others could gain. He was a great soul, who sacrificed his meal for the benefit of others. His name we may not know but his magnanimity we shall never forget.

The boy also stands for the providence of God. He was the right person with the right things at the right moment. God ordains numerous things in His own ways for our benefit. Little in the hands of Jesus is always much. May we give the little, we have in our hands into the hands of Jesus so that He might multiply and satisfy our needs.

St. Theresa of Calcutta in one of her prayers wrote thus:

‘I am nothing. Jesus is everything.

I do nothing of my own. He does it.

I am God's pencil, A tiny bit of pencil with which He writes.

What He likes, God writes through us,

And however imperfect instruments we may be, He writes beautifully.