

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Come...you who are thirsty. Isaiah 55:1-3
Nothing can come between us and God's love. Rom 8:31-39
'Give them something to eat yourselves.' Matthew 14:13-21

Next week:

Peter goes water-walking.
1 Kings 19:9-18; Romans
9:1-5; Matthew 14:22-33

In a nutshell

Believers are called to a generosity beyond their perceived limits. This is the challenge of today's Gospel. Even when grief weighs us down, when we feel least resourceful, we can still reach out and trust that God will bless our efforts and feed many with the bread of life. This week, share your gifts and energies with confidence.



'Give them something to eat yourselves,' says Jesus when the disciples come to him with the problem of a food shortage. In the following story we are reminded of the value of simplicity and sharing, and of the unexpected blessings they can bring.

An unexpected dinner party

We'd just moved house to the mountains and it was beautiful! 'If you're ever in the area, drop in!' we had told all our old friends. Well, one Sunday all our friends were in the area and they all dropped in! (At least, eight of them did.) And, considering they all arrived independently just on dinner time, the culinary challenge I faced was going to take some doing. How do you serve "Chicken in lemon, garlic and soy for four" for a dinner party of ten?!

With many a loaves-and-fishes joke circulating, it was a great night. The spirit of a spur-of-the-moment reunion of old friends outweighed the squashed up feeling around

our little table where a couple of heaters acted as make-shift chairs. In fact, the intimacy of the setting brought out the best in everyone. A depth of sharing and happiness prevailed which was quite unexpected. It was a celebration of faith and friendship that will stay in my memory banks for a long time - when the little we had went a long, long way. (J & J)

A reflection

Mother Teresa began her ministry by picking up a single dying man from the streets of Calcutta... Jean Vanier started the first L'Arche community by sharing his home with three men with mental disabilities... Mary MacKillop's religious order began in a make-shift classroom with a handful of impoverished children... The stories of the church community consistently tell us that world renown, large-scale ministries are born not from complex, well-funded plans, but people with generous hearts who say 'Yes, Lord, take what I have'.

Think...Talk

What we can offer people seems meagre in the face of their pressing needs. But the gospel calls us to give what we can. Talk about a time when your limited resources went a long way.

Pray

- For generosity of heart.
- To believe that God can bring much out of little.
- That we may be sent forth to feed the world with the Good News.



church below the rooftops

Reflect on your attitudes to giving. This story may add to your thoughts and discussion.

Gospel Giving

I noticed my father opening his mail. Among the letters was a brochure from a recognised charity appealing for a donation. 'Oh, you got one of those too,' I commented. 'With so many charities around these days, it's hard to know the best way to respond. I mean, should you put your efforts into one and ignore the others, or should you nominate so much for each...?' In the face of the complexities of the issues I was raising there was something beautifully simple about my father's response. 'If someone asks, I just give what I can at the time,' he said. 'If I can only give a little bit, I give a little bit. If I can give a lot, I give a lot.'



RealPeople offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.

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