

02 AUGUST 2020
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING HYMN

**Come to the table of the Lord, my friends,
Come to the altar of his love.**

True love means giving of yourselves, my friends,
demanding nothing in return.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

O Lord, draw near to Your servants and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness that, for those who glory in You as their Creator and guide, You may restore what You have created and keep safe what You have restored. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

FIRST READING: Is 55:1-3

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 144:8-9, 15-18

Our Response is: You open wide your hand, O Lord, you grant our desires.

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love,
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures. **R/**

The eyes of all creatures look to you
and you give them their food in due time.
You open wide your hand,
grant the desires of all who live. **R/**

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
call on him from their hearts. **R/**

SECOND READING: Rom 8:35, 37-39

GOSPEL: Mt 14:13-21

REFLECTION:

Marketing is an asset if used correctly. It can play on people's minds and emotions and entice them to eat this, buy that and get more etc... It makes us believe that the more we have the greater is our sense of satisfaction. On close examination, we find that marketing may often lead us to a false sense of hope or satisfaction. Our true satisfaction comes only from imitating Jesus. It is by giving what we have to God that he transforms it into abundance.

The first reading invites us *'to Come... and to drink at no cost'* and *'on ...rich food to enjoy'*. The responsorial psalm tells us that God is the sustainer of all. He grants the desires of all who live. The first reading, the responsorial psalm and the gospel remind us that it is God who gives drink to the thirsty and food to the hungry. We do not achieve this because of our own merit but because of who God is. What do you desire from God? Like the psalmist can we look to God with hope? **Pause.**

We see this beautiful image of God revealed by Jesus in the gospel. The disciples ask Jesus to send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food. Jesus, *'filled with pity'*, tells the disciples to *"give them... till they are full."* The disciples, on their own, cannot satisfy the crowd's hunger. They give Jesus all they have i.e. five loaves and two fish. Jesus blesses these gifts and returns them to the disciples. They now have enough to feed the crowds and even *"scraps remaining, twelve baskets full"*. The disciples were able to do for others because they offered Jesus all they had. Jesus produces an abundance that satisfies all. Am I willing to offer the Lord all that I have? It's never too late. Even while in the midst of the pandemic, am I willing to allow the Lord to transform what I have that will nourish/help others in need? **Pause.**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: It is God who nourishes us and grants our desires. Let us confidently bring our prayers to Him.

Our response is: **Loving Father, hear our prayer**

We pray for all the members of the Church that we may offer ourselves and all that we have to Jesus; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the people in the world that we may share the earth's resources equally with everyone; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for the sick, that they may be comforted and healed and for those who are hungry and suffering, that their needs will be satisfied; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all baptised Christians, that we may be open to Jesus' transforming power in our lives and share with others from God's abundance; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

Leader: Heavenly Father, in You we find our delight and joy. Hear our prayers that one day we may share in Your heavenly banquet. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us together at the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:

(All say the Lord's Prayer together) Our Father...

CLOSING PRAYER

O Lord, accompany with constant protection, those you renew with Your Word and in Your never-failing care for them, make them worthy of eternal redemption. Through Christ our lord. Amen

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Oh, Oh, Oh, how good is the Lord, - 3
I never will forget what he has done for me.

He gives us his Spirit, how good is the Lord.

He gives us new life....

He gives us his blessing...

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)