

**Homily – John 6:1-15**  
**17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B**  
**25<sup>th</sup> July 2021, Sooeey**

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Mother Teresa once came to know of a poor Hindu family in Calcutta who had been starving for many days. Conscious of their pathetic situation, Mother Teresa one day visited this particular family and brought them a big parcel of rice. The mother of the family received the bag of rice with deep gratitude. And to her surprise, Mother Teresa saw this poor woman divide the bag of rice into two equal portions. This simple woman then immediately rushed with one bundle of rice to her Moslem neighbor. And when she returned, Mother Teresa asked her why she had done such a generous deed. And, the woman gently replied: “Mother, my family can manage with half the rice in this bag. But, my neighbor’s family has several children and they are also poor and they are also starving, starving like us.”

In the Gospel of today, we hear John’s account of Jesus feeding thousands of people. And it tells us the story of a young boy who showed, ‘this same kind of generosity’. By sharing all he had, ‘five barley loaves and two fish’, he became instrumental in the working of a miracle by Jesus that fed thousands; a very simple offering, yet in sharing it, great things were achieved.

And much more, the boy in the Gospel had enough courage to give all that he had over to Jesus. Well! The key is to hand whatever we have over to the Lord and He will do the rest. It may not be in the way that we think it should be done. But, He would give us the strength, the courage, the hope and the faith to get through whatever life situation we are in right now. We need to take the chance just like that boy in the Gospel and lay it all at the feet of the Lord.

One day Mother Teresa brought a girl child from the street. And Mother would say she could see in the face of the child that the child was hungry. Probably, the little girl had not eaten for days. And with great love, Mother Teresa gave her a piece of bread. And the little one started eating the bread crumb by crumb. And Mother said: “Eat”. She said to the child again: “Eat the bread”. And the girl looked at Mother Teresa and said: “I am afraid to eat the bread, because I am afraid when it is finished, I will be hungry again”.

This is a reality. May be, we are not hungry for a piece of bread, but be sure that there might be somebody there in our family or in our neighbourhood or in our community who is unwanted, unloved, uncared for, and forgotten. And there, we might hear Jesus whispering to us: “Love one another with great love, love one another

as I have loved you, feed the hungry as I have, care for the sick as I have cared for, be compassionate as I always was and live for others to your last breath following my footsteps”.

At times, we all feel that we do not have enough, whether it is food or money or time or energy. And we forget about those people who have nothing in life to sustain themselves. As followers of Christ we need to commit ourselves dear friends to share and to work with God in communicating His compassion to all as the early Christians did. God always blesses those who share their blessings, time, and talents with others.

Paul had received a special pre-Christmas gift from his rich brother. It was a beautiful new car – fully loaded and ready to go. On Christmas Eve, when Paul came out of his office, a street kid was walking around the shiny new car, admiring it. “Is this your car, mister?” the kid asked. When he replied that it was, and that his brother had given it to him for Christmas, the boy said, “You mean your brother gave it to you, and it didn’t cost you anything? Free? For nothing? Gosh, I wish...” The boy hesitated, and Paul knew what he was about to say. He had heard it many times over the past few days. He was going to wish he had a brother like that. But what the boy said shocked Paul. “*I wish*“, the boy said, “*I wish I could*

*be a brother like that.*” — We can be a brother like that or a sister like that. All it takes is that we offer ourselves and what we have, to God. All it takes is that we cease to worry about how little we have and begin instead to think about what it is that we can offer to others, as the little boy in today’s Gospel story that shared his bread and fish to Jesus Who fed the multitude.

We are so privileged dear friends: ‘the same God who fed thousands who gathered in front of Him, is feeding each of us today through this Eucharistic Meal’. And this Eucharist should be the meaning of our lives. Without the Eucharist, we wouldn’t have the food of life. Without the Eucharist, we wouldn’t experience the daily miracle of God’s love and compassion. And as we are partaking of this great meal, let us pause a while and ask ourselves: “are we ready to love, to share and to help each other?” Remember! We can never know what impact an act of kindness and love can have on another person. Kindness begets kindness; we never know where our act of kindness will bear fruit.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta would say: “Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, and kindness in your smile.” God bless you all, **Amen.**

