

Twelve Baskets            Mark6:3--44    9th Sunday after Pentecost    July 22, 2018

And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish Mark 6

Twelve Baskets Full

Dear friends in Christ, today we see people. People who are tired, who are drained, who are pressed for time, who are hungry for anything. And we see God filling them with himself and all that they need, even 12 baskets full.

The disciples were worn out. They had been travelling, spreading the news of the kingdom of God, and had just returned to Jesus. They were worn out, but they could not find time to rest or eat. So they went with Jesus to a desolate place to find what they could not elsewhere.

But the people arrived before them. People from the town recognized them and came from many place to where he was going, even though it was a desolate place. And Jesus saw them, and he had compassion on them. He gave them what they needed, and he gave them himself as he taught them.

Now his disciples saw the problem. Night was coming and it was a desolate place. And they told Jesus to send the people away before it became desperate. They had a reasonable solution - let everyone fend for themselves. But Jesus told them, "You give them something to eat."

Desperate people. Disciples who are tired and worn out. Who need rest and food and time with Jesus and can't seem to get it here and can't get it anywhere else. People who went to desolate place. Now I've never planned a trip where I've had no idea where I would eat or sleep. I may not have known the exact place, but I knew about where I could stop. People didn't come to Jesus in a desolate place because they had full pantries and refrigerators, fulfilling jobs, money and all the comforts. They went to a desolate place because they found they, like the disciples, had no other place to go but to where Jesus was.

The question is not whether people need food or time or rest . The question is where can they get it.

I know finances. I know how much money is in the account, when I'll be paid, when bills are due. I can take a wrongful pride in taking care of myself, and look down on those who don't. I'm with the disciples that there is no way to pay for feeding all those people, that I barely have 5 loaves and 2 fish for myself. And a lot of you live or have lived on farms, and know what it is like to plan for months and years to make sure there is enough, even if the crop doesn't do well this year.

Jesus took what the disciples had, 5 loaves and 2 fish, and blessed it and gave it to the disciples. And they gave it to the people and everyone ate and was satisfied. And 5000 men were fed that day. And 12 baskets of food were left over. Jesus took what was there, which was not enough. And from his hands it was. And the disciples trusted what God gave them was enough, and fed 5000 men. Disciples, men women and children were filled, with 12 basket fulls left over.

Now we have a few fewer than 5000 here today. We think our pantries are full and we are doing OK and we don't need to reach for Jesus in the desolate place. WE tend to try to convince us full with food or alcohol or porn. But it isn't enough. So we tend to avoid those mourning the dead and caring for the sick for more than token visits, struggling with money or relationships or parenting, because it might remind us that we are empty and tired and in need of rest, that our efforts never result in security. Because we don't know how to help and we don't know if we have enough. It is easier to say that we are all in the same boat so everyone must find their own way than to say God has given enough.

But today Christ is with us in the desolate place, present in his word. Today he reminds us of his presence in word and sacrament. Today he tells us that even the desolation of death does not stand against him.

And he gives us his word. Told you fewer than 5000 here today. But God has given you his word. Share it today, and since there aren't 5000 here today, share it with those in your household, your neighbors and friends. Tell of the feast Christ gives, that all are fed and there are 12 baskets left over. The world is hungry and lonely and in need of rest. Trust in what Christ has given you. Give them the rest Christ has given you. And see the full harvest - 12 baskets left over amen.