

Seventeenth Sunday John 6 1-15

Most of us want the world to be different, don't we? We know that the world can be a much better place. In our hearts we know that this can't be the way God wants it .

We wish that there would never be any more wars.

We wish that not a single person would ever have to go hungry.

We wish that human would stop polluting the planet and stop contributing to its changing climate.

We wish that everyone would have good schools and a safe home and a decent job and access to health care.

We wish that more spouses would be faithful to each other and that parents would never hurt their children and that everyone would be honest and responsible and fair.

And we certainly wish that every religious leader and every person in any kind of authority would provide a better example to those they have the privileged to lead. **Yes**, we all would like for the world to be different. And the distance from where we are to where we want to be , appears to be a long one .

A very long one.

Children would almost certainly not see it that way . Once they are old enough and begin to understand the world around them, begin to hear about serious issues for the first time, they often can't understand why we adults don't simply **fix** them .

War ? Just stop fighting. <> Hunger ? Just grow more food and or spread it around better <. Climate change? Stop putting so much junk into the air.<> Better schools? Just collect more money from the people and buy the best stuff and hire the best teachers and give every student the best chance possible. **You get the picture .**

You see, for kids, no problem is too big . Everything is possible, both for themselves and the world around them.

We adults know better , Don't we ? We have been around the block. We know way more than they do . We have seen things. We know about all the different angles and opinions and ideas and obstacles. And we certainly know human nature in ways that children certainly don't. Kids may want all these problems to be fixed by us grownups , and we might feel the same way too . But the difference is , we know that it's not really possible.

The problems are just too big, too complicated , too entrenched in society and human history

◇◇◇<Or are They? ◇◇◇

There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many ?

Andrew in today's Gospel passage from John felt the problem he and his friends were facing was too big . Philip too , as did probably everyone who heard Jesus suggest that they try to feed all those who had followed him across the Sean of Galilee . After all, the crowd was in the thousands .

◇ **But what good are these for so many ?** ◇◇

It seems like a perfectly reasonable response . Andrew was no dummy . And neither are we . After all, there must be countless millions of people who go to bed hungry every single night.

There are probably countless millions who go to bed at night fearful that they might be harmed or abducted or bombed while they sleep;

There are countless millions who have no electricity or natural gas with which to cook their meals or warm their homes or refrigerate their food. There are countless millions of people who appear to have little or no hope, no chance at a decent job , or a decent roof over their head , or a chance to build their own happy , healthy ,

safe family . It is really quite sad , So many problems. Huge problems . All over the world.

And all we have are five loaves and two fish.

It is hard not to look at the size of the problem when considering what to do or not to do .

It is hard to not size up the situation before deciding whether to act or not to act , to get involved or to just sit on the side line. It is hard to not look at the totality of a problem and think to ourselves.

What difference could I possibly make ? I am just one person .

I am , just five loaves and a couple of fish .

And we are right , in a certain sense . We don't know and can't know . But that is not our job . That's not the kind of life God is asking us to lead , one in which everything is calculated and planned and evaluated and mapped out .

You see ,It really doesn't matter if we don't know how God is going to take the little we can each provide and turn it into something wonderful and life changing for others . In God's eyes no problem is too big and no act of love too small or unimportant or insignificant

In God's world. God's Kingdom , even small things can make a huge difference . Even small things can , in a very real sense , can change the world .

A couple of fish and five loaves can somehow satisfy the hunger of so many . Put simply , **every act of love** can mend a broken heart , heal a deep wound, quench a thirst , dissolved a grudge , soften an angry soul, comfort a lonely person , build a bridge, fill an empty stomach . **You See ◊ That is the miracle of faith**

And so my Brothers and Sisters

That is what we are invited to recommit ourselves to this day , recommit ourselves to not letting the immensity of the problems we face , drive us to inaction . Rather , we are called to tackle the big problems one small act of love at a time. And there can be no excuses , because every single one of us was created to do precisely that , to share our blessings with a world in need of Healing and Hope and Love .

Remember God wants to gather these things up , Take what ever seems like a little, take what seems to be too heavy to bear, take what ever seems to be hopeless, and from them bring about something good and beautiful and meaningful and life giving .

There is no room for skeptic here. There is too much to be done.

We may be the few, but with the blessing of Jesus, we have the grace and grit to ten to the many .

Bread taken blessed and shared , that is what we are called to do .