

For those of us who have the capacity and the resources to do so, in addition to prayer, we can support the efforts of CAFOD, Caritas, Aid to the Church in Need, Missio and pro-life organisations such as SPUC, Pro-life Alliance, Care-not-Killing and many, many others. Nothing will be wasted.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

*Graciously sanctify these gifts, O Lord, and, accepting the oblation of the spiritual sacrifice, make of us an eternal offering to you.*

### **Communion Reflection**

*“Without the Holy Eucharist there would be no happiness in this world; life would be insupportable. When we receive Holy Communion, we receive our joy and our happiness. The good God, wishing to give Himself to us in the Sacrament of His Love, gave us a vast and great desire, which He alone can satisfy. In the presence of this beautiful Sacrament, we are like a person dying of thirst by the side of a river ∇ he would only need to bend his head; like a person still remaining poor, close to a great treasure ∇ he need only stretch out his hand. He who communicates loses himself in God like a drop of water in the ocean. They can no more be separated.”*

St John Vianney

### **Prayer after Communion**

*Lord, you give us the strength of new life by the gift of the Eucharist. Protect us with your love and prepare us for eternal redemption.*



## **This Sunday's Readings:** ***Eighteenth Sunday Yr A*** **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020**

*A People Gathered and Nourish by God's Love*



Our readings this Sunday all address our basic human needs, be they physical or spiritual, but whatever our needs are, God implores us to come to Him. His love and only his love can give us the deep joy and satisfaction we hunger and thirst for, a joy that no worldly good can ever give.

### **Opening Prayer**

*God our Father, gifts without measure flow from your goodness to bring us your peace. Our life is your gift. Guide our life's journey, for only your love makes us whole. Keep us strong in your love.*

### **Isaiah 55: 1-3**

Thus says the Lord: “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

*'Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Everyone can relate to a time when they craved something, only to discover that having received that thing, it soon lost its appeal and our desires turned to something else. We see this most noticeably perhaps with children and the pressure felt by parents and grandparents to appease their children's longings in order that their child doesn't feel left out (remember cabbage patch dolls?). Our needs are real and God knows every one of them, but in only him will our deepest desires will be met. Jesus is the Bread of Life, the bread of eternal life, which doesn't cost a penny. 'Listen, listen to me...'*

#### **Psalm 144**

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

#### **Romans 8: 35. 37-39**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isn't wonderful that no matter what we do, God will never stop loving us? This can be hard to believe at times, especially for many people who have never experienced that kind of love, a love that has no conditions attached to it. Here St. Paul reminds us that no matter what happens in our lives, even death itself, God will never stop loving us. Jesus never said that life would be easy and again, it's difficult to believe we will 'triumph' through our trials (trials which most would rather not have), but we will. By the power and love of God, we will come through.

**Alleluia, Alleluia!** Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. **Alleluia!**

#### **Matthew 14: 13-21**

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

We are called to pray, and to pray without ceasing, but when Jesus looked upon the crowd, he didn't just take pity upon them, he didn't just show his compassion and wish them well; he translated his care and compassion into positive action. He took what little the disciples offered and, through the grace of God, did what the world would say was impossible, by multiplying the five loaves and the two fishes into an abundant feast for thousands. The little we are able to do or provide will be multiplied by God's grace in such a way that it becomes more than sufficient for the need. Jesus could have produced bread or manna from thin air to feed the crowd, but he chose instead to show that he needs us in order to do the job; he needs our five loaves and two fish. *(continued overleaf)*