

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, 31.7.2011 Holy Trinity
Matthew 14:13-21

Two weeks ago I drew your attention to the Good News that Jesus gave us "I am with you always".

To-day's Good News is that "God is good".

Last Sunday, Fr. Brian spoke of the congregation taking an active part in the sermon-time. What I am about to do is not really what he meant but here goes with my small contribution.

And in the course of the sermon I shall say a number of times "God is good" and I want you to reply "always".

Now let us try "God is good" "always".

In today's Gospel we find that Jesus' healing and teaching is so riveting for the crowd that they lose all sense of time.

Before they know it, the sun has set and in the failing light of twilight Jesus' disciples become aware of the need for food.

They suggest that Jesus should tell the crowds to make their way to nearby villages to find food.

Jesus, however, has something else in mind.

Maybe in the back of his mind was the good news, "God is good" "always".

He surprises the disciples by saying, "You give them something to eat."

Can you hear their protests? "But we don't have any food. Certainly not enough to feed this crowd, there must be all out five thousand people here. All we can rustle up is five loaves and two fish."

We can recognise the panic. We have been there.

There are too many people who are hurting and hungry in our country and throughout the world, in famine ridden countries, in war torn countries, in refugee camps.

There are too many unemployed, too many people who are hurting.

What can we do: we can't do it all?

Then Jesus says, "Bring me what you have".

Their meagre resources are brought to him, he blesses the food and it is distributed among the people and the people have more than enough to satisfy their needs.

He is saying in effect: "God is good" "always".

We don't have to rationalise this situation by trying to work out how it was done but accept what we have and offer it to God, no matter how little we think we have, no matter how meagre are our resources.

God will bless them and hand them back to be distributed among others.

I know how generous you are in relation to charities, the way in which you support the Samaritans and our World Vision children but can we do that wee bit more?

When you are doing your grocery shopping can you buy one extra tin or packet and bring it in on Sunday to be placed among the Samaritan goods to be offered at the altar?

Or can we receive enough money on a regular basis to support another child through World Vision?

And why should we do this? We do this because God's love for us overflows into the lives of others, because "God is good" "always".

This does not mean that people of faith will have an easy life, a life without problems or misery.

It does mean that God will give us the grace and aid to bear the load as we move through and overcome whatever comes our way.

God is God and is with us always.

We come as the Body of Christ to offer what we have so that God will bless and do what he will with it because "God is good" "always".