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ORDINARY 17B

28th July 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Sit down, close your eyes and breathe three deep, slow breaths.

Keeping your eyes closed - pay attention to your breath for a minute or more and in doing so, when you breathe in, imagine you are breathing in the love of God.

When you open your eyes look around you, what do you notice in your room that reminds you of the love of God?

If this is something you can hold, hold it, if it is to be looked at, look at it. As you do so, remember that you are in the presence of God.

When you are ready, offer this time of worship to God:

“Around me and within me, Spirit of God I thank you for your presence here. I offer each breath in worship to you. Amen”

You may now wish to say the Lord’s Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Reading: John 6:1-21 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

Today’s gospel reading from John 6 offers us a counterpoint to a leadership in which power without love is displayed. The only example of true Godliness in human form is in Jesus, and John 6 gives us the perfect example of love and power balanced together in the feeding of the 5,000.

So much has been said about this passage of the Gospel, but today, let us look at three pointers that we might take from Jesus’ actions about what love and power intermingled look like in practice:

1. Jesus worried about other’s needs and not just his own.
2. Jesus raised up the smallest among them with a teeny tiny offering and magnified this little boy’s gifts.
3. Jesus included everyone. Everyone got all the food they needed.

Could we ask our newly elected Government to govern by these three principles? How radically different would our politics and our nation be if those in power worried about other’s needs, raised up the least amongst us, and included everyone so that each person in social got what they needed, regardless of their status?

And what about us? Know that today; you are loved, and there is a great power in that. How can you live that principle for others to experience and understand too?

May you be blessed with the strength and wisdom to use your power in the way that Jesus did; to worry about others’ needs, to raise up the least amongst us, and to include everyone in the love of God; to grasp just how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

Amen.

Questions for reflection:

- 1) Do you think our nation would look different if our politicians exercised power rooted in love, how?
- 2) How do you think we'd all live differently if we had the power to grasp the magnitude of the love of God?

Responding in music

471 STF – Lord, I come to you - [YouTube](#)

615 STF – Let love be real, in giving and receiving - [YouTube](#)

Prayers of intercession

Thank you God that you love me.

Thank you that you are a God of great power and great love.

Thank you for all the beauty and hope of your creation.

Thank you for the ways that it is displayed in my life. In the stillness, I whisper my own prayers of thanks.

[silence]

Sorry God that too often I get it wrong.

Sorry for when I exercise power without love.

Sorry for when I prioritise love of myself in a way that is damaging to others.

Thank you for your forgiveness and for your Grace.

[silence]

Loving God, I pray for my community here in this place,

For those known to me and those unknown

Show me how to express your perfect love and power

And how to be a loving neighbour.

[silence]

Amen.

Blessing

May God help me to turn my life towards him,

May he use me to transform the lives of those around me

And join in with what the Spirit of God is doing already.

May Almighty God bless you and guide you on your way,

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 29th July

- Take a moment to be peaceful.
- If you are able you may like to plant your feet on the floor and concentrate on your body being still (if this is hard then do just sit quietly and comfortably). Notice how you feel and what you are thinking about and let those things float away giving thanks for each even if they are difficult feelings or thoughts
- When you are ready, raise your hands open before you and give thanks for the moment you are in.

Tuesday 30th July

- What does the good news of the Gospel feel like to you? Can you express it as a prayer of thanks in just a sentence or two?

Wednesday 31st July

- God of all creation, I worship you.
- You know me – what I need, what I rejoice in, what I'm nervous about.
- You see me – as the unique individual you created with all my little habits and characteristics.
- You hear me – when I pray aloud or silently,
- You meet me – here and now and I am content.
- God of all creation, I worship you. Amen

Thursday 1st August

- And so this new month begins – the summer-month of August.
- Take a moment to think through all that you expect to happen, and all of your summer-plans. Pray that you may notice God at work in them.
- Then take a moment to pray about all that might surprise you or that you might not expect for this month – obviously you won't have details, but spend a minute praying for the unexpected things that will happen to and around you. Pray that you may seize opportunities to share God's love.

Friday 2nd August

- Creator God, great shepherd of the sheep, fill me with your hope as I pray. Holy Spirit, give me the strength and courage for this day, fill me with the peace I need, and the joy of being surrounded by your love. Help me to notice where your love is at work in the world, and to get involved where I can.
- Lord of love, show me what is mine to do today. Amen.

Saturday 3rd August

- Pour a glass of water.
- Think about the things you do that get in the way of your relationship with God. You might think it muddies the water of your life, but God forgives us for all these things, and offers us living water.
- Drink some of the water and give thanks for the way God reaches out to you with love and forgiveness.