**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer, July 25, 2021**

**17th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*“We who lived in concentration camps can remember the people who walked through the huts giving away their last piece of bread.”  Viktor E. Frankl*

**HELLOs** and then Betty mutes everyone. **(Suzie and Betty)**

**WELCOME  (Suzie De Quattro)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Betty and I had the pleasure of preparing for this Sunday.
* Thanks to Linda Donaldson and Reggie Ott for our music.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today:

 Judith Galleazzi, Jim De Quattro, Sr. Marie McCarthy, Nancy Sushinsky,

 Kathy Cavanaugh, Kathy Heller, George Urban, Sr. Grace Hartzog, and George Fulk.

* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Betty)**

To be with God and each other, we need to first be with ourselves.  Let your breath slow and deepen and carry ease into your body and your mind.  We pray:

May I quiet my words and listen….

May I calm my thoughts and be….

May I soften my heart and open….

May I still my soul and receive….

(Pause)

Now we begin with Linda Donaldson leading us in a great song of welcome -

**OPENING  SONG – ALL ARE WELCOME** by Marty Haugen **(Linda Donaldson)**

Let us build a house
Where love can dwell
And all can safely live,,
A place where
Saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
Rock of faith and vault of grace,
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions.

All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found
In water, wine and wheat,
A banquet hall on holy ground
Where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God, through Jesus,
Is revealed in time and space
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us.

All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house
where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they’ve known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God’s face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

**GREETING / CALL TO WORSHIP (Betty)**

Beloved Community, rejoice in God’s welcome!Alleluia, alleluia!

**All:** Thanks be to God!  Alleluia!  Alleluia!

The Spirit of Christ will make us a banquet that all can share!  Alleluia, alleluia!

**All:** Thanks be to God!  Alleluia!  Alleluia!

**GATHERING PRAYER (Betty)**

O gracious mystery that we name God,

gather the fragments we carry within us.

Let us become whole in you.

Let us become bread for the world.

Amen.

**INTRO TO THEME (Suzie)**

This week our readings remind us that we can trust God, AND they add an important corollary: we can trust each other.  Together we have plenty.

Let’s start with a few questions. First: let’s each ponder for a minute -- what do we feel we need to be safe and comfortable? (Longish pause.[

Betty and I notice that our own answers might build in an unconscious cushion. To care for and protect the people we love, do we possibly feel safe and responsible only if we hold onto a bit more than we need? It could be anything -- housing, good schools, access to medical care, vacation spots, or fresh food – where meeting our needs doesn’t feel like “enough.” [Pause]

And if we are honest with ourselves, do we ever also think that we have earned/worked hard for/paid for and in other ways deserve to have these things?.  [Short pause] And then we have to ask ourselves what our reaction is to people who don’t have what we have. What do they deserve? [Short pause]

Consider that thirty thousand children die every day of absolutely preventable causes associated with hunger.  In the USA, we waste 182,000 tons of food per day.

Today the gospel challenges us to explore what it would mean to truly believe there is plenty to share.  John tells us about thousands of people who were hungry.  The story of the loaves and fishes is told six times in the New Testament and never once does the bible say that Jesus multiplied the food. Is it possible that when Jesus blessed and shared what the child brought to the disciples, he set off a wave of sharing among the crowd of strangers, which let everyone be satisfied.  Because John tells us that Jesus was outside of Jewish territory, many people may have been Gentiles, which emphasizes the message of sharing without restrictions.

It is too easy to lament the condition of the world and, like the disciples, feel overwhelmed. Jesus says, ‘just bring me what you have and let’s get started.’

*(Slight pause)*

Now Judith Galleazzi will read from Psalm 145.  Then Jim De Quattro will offer questions and silence for reflection.  Feel free to stay with whatever question calls you.

**READING 1**   [Ps 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/psalms/145?10) **(Judith Galleazzi)**

The hand of YHWH feeds us; God answers all our needs.

Let all your creatures praise you, YHWH,
    and your holy people bless you.
Let them tell of the glory of your reign
    and speak of your strength.

The eyes of all look to you in hope,
    and you give them their food in due season;
you open your hand
    and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

YHWH, you are just in all your ways
    and loving toward all you have created.
You are near to all who call upon you,
    to all who call upon you in truth.

The hand of YHWH feeds us; God answers all our needs.

**QUESTIONS 1 (Jim De Quattro)**

What cravings do you see in your own way of life?  What is your deep hunger?

How do you see God’s role in feeding your hungers or the hungers of the world?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE**     **(Betty:** Share slide 1, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

Betty:  Now Sr. Marie McCarthy will read a poem by Alice Walker.

**READING 2**:  “To Change the World Enough” by Alice Walker    **(Sr. Marie McCarthy)**

To change the world enough
you must cease to be afraid
of the poor.
We experience your fear as the least pardonable of
humiliations; in the past
it has sent us scurrying off
daunted and ashamed
into the shadows.
Now,
the world ending
the only one all of us have known
we seek the same
fresh light
you do:
the same high place
and ample table.
The poor always believe
there is room enough
for all of us;
the very rich never seem to have heard
of this.
In us there is wisdom of how to share
loaves and fishes
however few;
we do this everyday.
Learn from us,
we ask you.
We enter now
the dreaded location
of Earth's reckoning;
no longer far
off
or hidden in books
that claim to disclose
revelations;
it is here.
We must walk together without fear.
There is no path without us.

**QUESTIONS 2 (Jim De Quattro)**

The poet writes, “You must cease to be afraid of the poor.” What rises in you as you recognize times you have felt that fear?

In what ways might you act as if you deserve what you have? How does that feel?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE**     **(Betty:** Share slide 2, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

Betty:  Now Nancy Sushinsky will read from the 6th chapter of the gospel of John.

**READING 3:** [Jn 6:1-15](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/6?1) **(Nancy Sushinsky)**

Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he had done in curing the sick.

Jesus climbed the hillside and sat down there with his disciples. It was shortly before Passover and Jesus saw the crowds approaching.  Jesus said to Philip, 'Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?'

Jesus knew very well what he intended to do, but asked because he wondered how Phillip would respond.

Phillip answered, “Not even two hundred days’ wages could buy enough bread to give each of them a small bite,”

One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Jesus, “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish.  But what good are these with so many hungry people?”

Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. And as many as five thousand families sat down.

Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting there;  Jesus did the same with the fish, giving out as much as they could eat.

When the people had eaten their fill, Jesus said to his disciples, “Gather up the leftovers, so that nothing will be wasted.” So they picked them up and filled twelve large baskets with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves.

When the people saw this sign Jesus had done, they said, “This is the Prophet, who is to come into the world.”

Jesus, seeing that the people were about to carry him off to make him king, escaped into the hills alone.

**QUESTIONS 3 (Jim De Quattro)**

Consider a time you shared more of your resources than felt comfortable to you. What let you do that?

When have you been the recipient of unexpected generosity? How did you feel?

 **COMMUNAL SILENCE**     **(Betty:** Share slide 3, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

Betty:  Kathy Cavanaugh will now lead our sharing.

**SHARING  (Kathy Cavanaugh)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings.  That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us.  We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening,

So let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections.  [Long pause.]

Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute again afterwards.

Who would like to begin our sharing?

(Sharing)

Thank you.

Now Kathy Heller will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY (Kathy Heller)**

Now let’s join the crowd at the moment when Jesus shares all **he** has so that **we** can discover our own abundance.

In gratitude for whatever is abundant in our livres, we pray.  Holy One, hear our prayer.

For understanding that unplanned distractions -- and even abundant sorrows -- can become grace, we pray.  Holy One, hear our prayer.

For people who have never felt abundant love, we pray.  Holy One, hear our prayer.

For people whose burdens grind down their capacity to give and to receive, we pray.  Holy One, hear our prayer.

For nourishment and joy among leaders of women religious as they prepare for their annual assembly, we pray.  Holy One, hear our prayer.

Now let’s remember the feelings and prayers that arose in us as we shared reflections, and also the prayers we carry with us.  *[Pause.]*

Now, for what else shall we pray?  Please remember to unmute and mute yourself.

(People speak.)

Thank you.

O God, we give you all our prayers, spoken and unspoken.  We will do all that we can to put our prayers into action – while entrusting the outcome to you.  Amen.

*(Pause.)*

**OFFERTORY (George Urban)**

Sit with the feeling of having plenty to share.  Look around.  Whose hunger can you help to satisfy this week?  How? Will you make that commitment?  *[Pause.]*

Let us pray.  Generous God, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so that we may be a light and a witness to your abundant love.  Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Sr. Grace Hartzog)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in and among us.  [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet

and said, “… as I have done for you, you should also do.”

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands, and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it.  [Pause.]

Holy One, give us confidence in you and in one another.

Make us your bread of abundance.  Make us your wine of joy.

Let even our fragments be plenty to share.

Amen.

**OUR FATHER                                                                                          (George Fulk)**

Now let us join our hearts with people who seek justice and peace throughout the world as we pray:

***All (muted):*** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.  Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.  Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Betty)**

Let us extend our hands as we bless each other in the words of Alice Walker:

Yes, we --
all of us --
refuse to forget
each other
The world we want is on the way~~;~~

and we hear her breathing.
That world we want is Us; *united;* already moving
into it.”

O You who love us before we exist and forgive us before we ask, keep us moving on this path.  Amen.

With Reggie Ott, now let’s celebrate that we have plenty to share:

**CLOSING SONG:  BREAD TO SHARE by Marty Haugen  (Reggie Ott)**

Refrain: Plenty of bread at the feast of life, plenty of bread to share.
Plenty of bread at the feast of life, there is plenty of bread to share.

1. Bread for every hunger: we have plenty to share.
The bread of joy and gladness: we have plenty to share.
The bread of grace and mercy: we have plenty to share,
we have plenty of bread to share.

2. Bread for those who sorrow: we have plenty to share.
The bread of life and laughter: we have plenty to share.
The bread of strength and justice: we have plenty to share,
we have plenty of bread to share.

3. Bread for every sister: we have plenty to share.
Bread for every brother: we have plenty to share.
Bread for freedom's journey: we have plenty to share,
we have plenty of bread to share.

4. Bread of hope and kindness: we have plenty to share.
Bread of your compassion: we have plenty to share.
Bread of love and welcome: we have plenty to share,
we have plenty of bread to share.

**RESOURCES**

Settling in:  Thanks to Maryann Dolan for the prayer by Mary Davis, which came to Maryann by way of Bon Secours Spirituality Center.

Second reading: “To Change the World Enough” by Alice Walker - <https://www.best-poems.net/poem/to-change-the-world-enough-by-alice-walker.html>

Final Blessing – excerpt from “The World We Want Is Us” by Alice Walker – [The Quarry: A Social Justice Poetry Database](http://www.splitthisrock.org/poetry-database).

Theme and reflection resources:

Mike Rivage-Seul blogpost, July 27, 2018 - <https://mikerivageseul.com/2018/07/27/women-not-jesus-work-the-miracle-of-loaves-fishes-17th-sunday-in-ordinary-time/>

Sr. Carol L. Dempsey, 7/29/2018 reflections in National Catholic Reporter Sunday Resources - <https://www.ncronline.org/news/spirituality/scripture-life/seventeenth-sunday-ordinary-time-0>

Afou Chantal Bengaly, 7/29/2018 homily at Catholic Women Preach - <https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/07292018>

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, “Fragments from some prophetic loaves and fishes, 7/4/2010 - <https://ronrolheiser.com/fragments-from-some-prophetic-loaves-and-fishes/#.YL-JIEwpDIU>

Sr. Lelia “Lil” Mattingly 2018 reflection, Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns - <https://maryknollogc.org/resources/scripture/eighteenth-sunday-ordinary-time-1>

We also drew on what we had done for a similar Gospel in 2020. In 2020 we drew on:

Sr. Simone Campbell, “A Theology of Abundance” - <https://networkadvocates.org/21stcenturypoverty/abundance/>

Fr. Richard Rohr, “Scarcity or Abundance?” -

<https://cac.org/scarcity-or-abundance-2018-07-05/>

Sr. Simone Campbell, “Loaves and Fishes” poem in the 2013 reflective journal of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious - <https://lcwr.org/publications/navigating-shifts>

Casey Stanton, homily for the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2020 - <https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/08022020>

Sr. Mary M. McGlone, resources for the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2020 -

<https://www.ncronline.org/sunday-resource/aug-2-2020-eighteenth-sunday-ordinary-time>

Hunger data: <https://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs>