

Reflection on John 6:1-14 - What's in your Lunchbox?

In today's reading we hear how Jesus fed a huge crowd of people who had come to him. When I think about this reading, it strikes me that Jesus didn't conjure some fancy banquet but worked with a simple everyday item: a meal packed for a boy. The kind of meal, our own mum's and dad's send us off to school with. The kind of meal we would have each day in our lunch box

What's in your lunch box?



Who remembers what they got in their lunch box as a child? Or still get now?

I remember peanut paste sandwiches and granny smith apples,
or my mum's favourite: chocolate sandwiches...

What did you get?

< Who would like to share what they got regularly or or was a favourite in their lunch box

Those are the physical items we get in our lunchboxes.

But then I started to think: what else was packed in to our lunch boxes?

The care and love of our parents. Their encouragement and support.

So what might our God, our heavenly parent – whom Jesus says to call Father or Daddy – pack for us in our lunch boxes? How might Jesus feed us even now?

Today I've brought in my lunch box.

I need some volunteers to find out what's in it, so if my 4 volunteers will give me a hand and pull out a box one at a time.

<Child volunteers pull out a box, one at a time.>

Love



Love: God's love is abundant, everlasting and available for all – it is never in short supply. So often worldly voices teach us to hang on to what we have to strive for more. But Mother Theresa says that God loves us with a love that is tender, forgiving and complete. A love not earned but there for us to accept and embrace. This love of God gives us the strength to go out into the world to love and server others.

Creation



Creation: We must not forget that physical needs are important as well. A few months ago I got to hear Aunty Leonore Parker, a wise woman from the Yaegl people in NSW. She spoke of how the creator spirit of God works with our mother earth to provide the rains, the warmth, and the soil for all that we need. This wisdom can also be found throughout the bible: from psalms mediating on God's wonderful work in creation to Paul seeing all of creation labouring to bring forth God's plan.

Encouragement

Encouragement: God's word is the encouragement that helps us try new things, the comfort when we are sad, and the helper who keeps us going when the road ahead looks bleak. Jesus often spoke words of comfort and hope to his disciples – to help them through the difficult days ahead, and of the comforter he would send when he had left them. For me, god's encouragement has let me set out from Perth to unknown Melbourne. And from Melbourne to see Alex in PNG – despite having only had a few weeks to get to know each other and much anxiety from my family. And it was the leap of faith that finally brought us together in Melbourne. That encouragement is here now as we question where we are going as a church.

Life



Life: this includes not just physical life, which so abundantly fills our world, but those things that make life worth living, or make us say wow! It is that essence lets us see beauty or love in the ordinary things of life. It is god's forgiveness that sets us free from mistakes and worries that take away from life. It is the spirit that bring us close to God and each other. It is the flowing fountain Jesus promises of life in all its fullness if only we ask.

Sharing (no slide)

These are just a few of the things that God feeds us with: there are many others. Perhaps some speak specifically to you: justice, grace, freedom, forgiveness... And there will be a chance to respond with these soon.

Jesus miracles are not about some event of power in the past: rather they point to our relation with God. Today we see a God who gives abundantly, a God whose love is found in simple everyday things. Jesus is the key, calling us to accept God's overflowing life and love.

Once we accept this great abundance, how do we respond?

If God's generosity is overflowing, then we can share in turn: sharing the good things we have. Above all, we can share God's love and Jesus' message of hope.