

“Divine Economy” 2023-07-23- Mark 8:1-9 - Trinity 7 2023

With divine economy, the Holy Spirit graces us with Christ’s compassion. Indeed, we, cannot subsist alone. We, are helpless, like babes in a “remote place.” Where can we buy spiritual food? What can possibly satisfy our hunger? If we look within, we find envy, strife, and all manner of unclean things.

And so too these crowds, whose pressing need has caused them to come out after Jesus. Old and young alike, a vast crowd, yet though there were many of them they were individually “in a remote place.” St. Mark says little of the people—whether they knew of their dire strait or not—Jesus saw their need and had compassion.

“I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat...” Hearing the Word of God has taken away their self-sufficiency. All that they had was gone. Before God in this “remote place” He was all they had left. Apart from Him they have no hope. Apart from Him “they will faint by the way.” We are no different.

God’s Law leaves us, as it were, bare and naked without excuse. Indeed, the Holy Spirit gives King David to see forward in space and time to this “remote place” saying, “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.” He found them all in a “remote place.” “They are all

“Divine Economy” 2023-07-23- Mark 8:1-9 - Trinity 7 2023

gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

And thus, these people who have followed Jesus their provider, “Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.” And so His Disciples are judged unfaithful long ago by King David, for they would seek answer for the great need of God’s people—the crowds He drew near—in themselves. “ ‘From where can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?’ And he asked them, ‘How many loaves have ye?’ And they said, ‘Seven.’ ” Mercifully through St. Mark, the law of Jesus’ sermon is brief. But stark. His disciples don’t have a clue. *They* are the “workers of iniquity” who “call not upon the Lord” —“from whence can a man satisfy?” Ouch!

Indeed, how can man satisfy such great need? “There is none that does good, no, not one.” So, these faithless men in this remote place don’t know what to do. “The wages of sin is death...” They are in this remote place that they may see their futility. Not just their faithlessness, but that they may despair of themselves. How can man satisfy such a great need? A man cannot! What man can make something from nothing?

“Divine Economy” 2023-07-23- Mark 8:1-9 - Trinity 7 2023

In the beginning in that remote place, it was no man, but God Himself who breathed life into His nostrils. So also, can no man in a “remote place” make bread from stones.

Yet this man, this Jesus, “commanded the people to sit down... and He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.”

“And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them. So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.”

And as I said, with a divine economy, the Holy Spirit sets the Word before you saying, “take and eat.” Indeed, what is it that the Holy Spirit writing by St. Mark would have us Christians recall in these words of Jesus? What is it that He intends for you to ponder, to think, at the reading and re-reading of His gospel in the Church? Let the Gospel ring in your ears and answer. Jesus “took... gave thanks, and brake...” and then, “He blessed...” And what happened? “They did eat and were filled...”

Now it’s clear this miracle of Jesus occurs historically *before* He gives the Disciples the Holy Sacrament. So as this event occurs

“Divine Economy” 2023-07-23- Mark 8:1-9 - Trinity 7 2023

chronologically in Jesus’ Ministry, its’ emphasis was one thing, namely, this is no ordinary man born after the flesh. This man—Jesus—is God.

Who else can create something out of nothing? But those who were eyewitnesses perhaps understood nothing more on that day than Jesus was their new “meal ticket.” Yet aside from their possible understanding or misunderstanding, in St Mark’s Gospel Jesus is more than just the Israel’s new bread-king—their new benefactor.

Jesus is God, yes, God-enfleshed making good on His Promise, delivering the Good in Person. And St Mark, evangelist, well acquainted with St Matthew’s Gospel and the universal practice of the Church as to Holy Communion—in that divine economy while proclaiming Jesus is God, we are shown too, where He is to be found today!

We are meant see in Jesus’ feeding of these 4000-some souls not just that Jesus, that is God, is provider of daily bread, that is, every bodily need. St. Mark directs far beyond our daily ration of food, shelter, and clothing. This impossible feeding of the four thousand prefigures, foreshadows, foretells of Jesus’ impossible feeding of the whole world. For Jesus says He gives His Flesh “for the life of the world.”

How can Jesus’ Body satisfy so many? Jesus is God. He regularly does the impossible. As He feeds four thousand famished, so also He gives us True Meat and True Drink, feeding us who are likewise an

“Divine Economy” 2023-07-23- Mark 8:1-9 - Trinity 7 2023

hungry and thirsty, in a “remote place” consumed by our sins. Left to ourselves in the wilderness we’re as good as dead; “the wages of sin is death.”

“But the gift of God is eternal life.” Comes now Jesus not to receive our worship and praise, for we are in a remote place. We are half-dead, and left to ourselves would perish. Your faith isn’t enough to sustain you; that is God’s proper work through the Holy Spirit. So comes Jesus not to receive of you, but that you might receive of Him.

And He gave thanks, He brake, and He gave... that He might deliver Himself unto you that you might be delivered of Him to the Father.

Indeed, we are here given by God to consume and digest Him that He might consume and digest in us everything that opposes that Faith once delivered to the Saints. His Body and His Blood is that “Angel of the Lord that encamps round about them that fear Him.” Baptised in Him, we are transferred from death to life, from that “remote place” to Green Pasture and Cool Water remaining in and by the Body and Blood Jesus preserved holy and righteous in His sight all the days of our life, for Jesus’ most holy Passion’s sake. Amen.