LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH Garner, NC

Four words of sacrament

In the name…

Let us pray…

When the disciples charged with feeding the crowd found a child with 5 loveas and two fishes. Jesus TOOK,BLESSED, BROKE, and GAVE the bread These are the four decisive verbs of the sacrament. And here it is, on the mountain, during the time of Passover a Eucharist feeding the crowd, an act of gratitude

A thanksgiving. Much is illustrated here. Abundance, Generosity, the boy sharing the abundance he had. It shows, that if bread is broken and shared,

There is similar miracle in 2nd Kings of the Old Testament. Elisha is the one dong the feeding. He trusts God’s Word that 20 loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain will not only feed 100 people, but there will be food left over. The miracles in the stories are great, but it is also about relationships. God and His people and the people there with other people.

There have been various explanations as to how such a miracle could have happened. People in ancient times would have carried food with them while they were travelling just as we would today. And so maybe the boy’s generosity inspired others to share their food as well. Maybe food in the group was not as scarce as the disciples might have first thought. They might have been similar to the sheep without a shepherd as described in last week’s gospel in Mark, but they were not described that way. They were not even described as being poor.

The phrase today is that there is food scarcity. There is no such thing as scarcity. They did not appear to experience that. They had the food and so they ate.

It was satisfying to their hunger, and it was sacramental. Today we have brought together what we have in abundance for our “You Bring It” fellowship. If we suddenly had more people show up there would be enough for all. Abundance for us is all a result of the generosity of God the Creator, So let’s this day and every day think of it and other fellowships as sacraments. We TAKE what we have, without formally doing so, we have BLESSED it by being a community gathered together to feed our hunger. We BREAK it in order to have enough to go around, and we GIVE in more ways than just “dishing it out, bu we have given of our time to buy, prepare and bring it. And that is all wrapped together in giving it. And our ability to share the abundance is because of the gratitude we have for our Creator Who provides the abundance for us. That is why it is very seldom that the bins are empty in the narthex. That is why when the call comes to bring in food, we do it. When there is a family in need of casseroles either because of illness or a time of grieving mourning or even feelings of depression, we do it. God has graced us with abundance and we respond with gratitude by making it available to others.

It seems like continually there are stories coming out about heroics during times of war and worldwide hot spots. I was told about the Bielski partisans, 3 brothers in Belarus who saved 1200 Jews from the Nazis. They built a community in the forests which they knew all too well and their enemies did not. However, initially it was unintentional. They just fled to the forests because when the Nazis first barreled through their town after watching it they returned to their farmhouse to find their parents dead.

So originally it was just survival for them and their younger brother who was hiding. The first Jews that happened upon them the major concern was they did not have food for themselves let alone others. Their generosity won out. They shared, then grew more population, grew food then and shared it again. And the handful of people grew and the food multiplied.

They did not know it, but it was sacramental. They TOOK the food and without a formal blessing, just by sharing it, BLESSED it, BROKE because if you had a loaf it had to go around. And GAVE it to those who were hungry.

When we collect, we are doing similar. It may not seem on scale with what the Bielskis did, but it is important to each and everyone who receives it.

If it was sacramental, then where was the altar on that mountainside to where people followed Jesus?

It is wherever two or three or 5000 are gathered together.

Where is the altar when people eat our foodstuffs? Could be a kitchen table, for some maybe just boxes or the floor, still wherever two or three or families or multiple generations ae gathered together.

The furniture is not important, it is the feeding, the giving, the sharing that is important, the holiness of sharing food with one another that is important

That is just one way we see the holy in this world where sometimes “HOLY is not a word we use to describe it. Remember Our Father Created it, and us and made us caretakers of both His World and His people who ijnhabit it.

In the name…