

Reflection Trinity 9 John 6:1-21

This is the first of five weeks in which John chapter 6 features as the Gospel reading, spiralling around themes of bread, Eucharist and community. One starting point is to look at our own community, both in terms of a faith community and the wider social setting. John's community was urban or even metropolitan, diverse and complex, under pressure from outside as a minority living with a hostile majority, but also divided internally: for example about the messiahship of Jesus. What does our community look like, inside Church and outside? Who might we be overlooking?

This Sunday's reading is John's version of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. At a literal level, the people are hungry and they seem to have nothing with them. A great deal of food is produced; even when they have had their fill, there is a large quantity left over. What does this say locally about food economics and food poverty?

The crowds (even maybe a rabble) are transformed into a community by the simple means of sharing bread. Hungry individuals are healed from their hunger and become a group which responds to Jesus by recognizing the signs he has done. While community is an often over-used term, this picture of the Jesus community begs questions to us: how are our churches communities in this sense rather than just crowds of individuals? How do we model community for those outside church and how do we learn from secular communities? Are on-line communities a real alternative to flesh-and-blood encounters?

[adapted from *Roots* magazine in which I first published similar ideas in 2015]

Fr David



NEXT SUNDAY 04.08.2024 Transfiguration
10.30am in the Church

READINGS: OT Daniel 7: 9, 10, 13, 14
NT 2 Peter 1: 16-19
GOSPEL Luke 9: 28-36



CONTACT US

Fr David Nixon 01392 667192. Day off: Mondays
rev.dave@virgin.net

Revd Carys Puleston Curate 07977090932
rev.carys@gmail.com

[Revd Sarah Cumming Assistant Priest on secondment
at Pinhoe Church until 28th July]

Revd Alison Whiting Associate Priest
rev.alisonwhiting@gmail.com

Revd Mike Clark Associate Priest
mike.clark@exeter.anglican.org

Phil Baker, Reader 07970 216740
lionelbaker@outlook.com

Revd Terry Litherland 07594633195
tlitherland36@gmail.com

Ian Totterdell Church Warden 01392 848674
07536459096 ian.totterdell@cantab.net

Liz Pioneer Community Worker
pioneerstthomas@gmail.com

Email: parishoffice@stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sttexeter

Website: www.stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk

X (formerly Twitter): @sttexeter

Office Tel: 01392 437486 Messages at any time.



St Thomas, Exeter

28th July 2024

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in Church

Today

10.30am Sung Eucharist & Holy Baptism
Hymn Numbers

15 All my hope on God is founded

222 I am the bread of life

188 Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

Tuesday 30th July

7.30pm House Group. 'To the Gentiles'

Wednesday 31st July

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

7.30pm PCC Meeting

Thursday 1st August

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

Friday 2nd August

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

2 Kings 4: 42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, 'Give it to the people and let them eat.' But his servant said, 'How can I set this before a hundred people?' So he repeated, 'Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the Lord, "They shall eat and have some left."' He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the Lord.

Ephesians 3: 14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

John 6: 1-21

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.' When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid.' Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land towards which they were going.

Post Communion

Holy Father, who gathered us here around the table of your Son to share this meal with the whole household of God: in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace, gather people of every race and language to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NOTICES

Community Larder has closed (existing clients are being transferred to the main Exeter Foodbank, which now operates from Cowick Street). Collection bins for the Foodbank are available in many local supermarkets and in a few weeks time we will be starting a collection in Church at the Sunday service.

Further details of St Thomas Taster Prayer Walks are here!

We need some people from the congregation to attend the walks to give us valuable feedback. Each walk will take no more than 1 hour.

Reminder! We are having our second prayer walk this week. *Thursday 1st August: Meet at 6pm* for a slow 1.4 mile walk, undertaking one type of prayer walk, wonderfully created by Jenny. There is a 120 metre slope as part of this walk but no steps. There is also a wet weather plan if heavy rain.

Knit & Natter will be having a break for 2 weeks as follows: *Thursdays 1st and 8th August*. Back to normal weekly meetings on *Thursday 15th August*.

