



*“When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples,
‘Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted.’
So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets with
fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than
they could eat.” (John 6:12-13)*

In the readings this week we hear how God expresses His love so abundantly that there is more than enough for everyone. The blessings He pours out, first through Elisha the prophet and then personally by Jesus, are an incredible example of God’s desire care for us.

The Gospel tells us that the crowd following Jesus was massive, with about five thousand men in total. Jesus asks Philip how they can feed everyone, not because He is unsure of what to do, rather He wants to emphasize how miraculous his actions are going to be. Philip tries to do some math in order to estimate the cost of such a large meal and concludes that even if they could find a place to buy everyone food it would be very expensive. He is trying to approach the problem in a purely rational and worldly way and is forced to conclude that it is impossible. Sometimes it can be easy for us to look at our own problems in a similar way, and we often become discouraged when it seems that there may not be a solution.

Andrew also tries to come up with a solution which seems unlikely to work. He finds a boy with a few loaves and some fish, but not enough to feed everyone. But then he goes to Jesus and asks if it will do any good. Even when the problem seemed impossible to solve, Andrew knew that Jesus would have some kind of answer, even if he didn’t imagine that Jesus would be able to use the loaves and fish to feed everyone. We can do the same with our problems as well: take the problem to Jesus and entrust it to Him. If Andrew had simply taken the food and distributed it on his own there would not have been a miracle. It was only when he brought the problem to Jesus, and thus showed his willingness to let God take over, that the miracle was possible.

But Jesus did not perform this miracle immediately. There was one very important step before He distributed the loaves: He gave thanks. It can seem like an unimportant detail that is easy to miss, but that little phrase shows us the importance of giving thanks for what we have already received from God. When we forget to thank God for His gifts to us it is easy for our prayer to turn into a wish-list, and we begin to treat God like a genie in a bottle. But when we give thanks for what we already have, no matter how big or how small our gifts may be, we are reminded of the love that God has already shown us. In this way we are more open to His work in our lives. Instead of being like Philip, lost as we try to solve our problems on our own, we should be open to God so that we can be like Andrew, who brought his problems to Jesus and then let Him take over.