

Dear People of God,

Recently, I was reading the Bishop of Alabama's column in their diocesan newspaper and his words reminded me of some I have often preached and taught. I have said before, that we are to be Christ to one another; we are to seek Christ in others; we are sacraments to one another (an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace to others).

Bishop Parsley's words follow:

Each time we celebrate the Holy Eucharist, we remember the stories of the feeding of the crowds. They are Eucharistic stories, and our lives are meant to be Eucharistic lives. As Jesus took the loaves, blessed, broke and gave them, so are we to do with our lives.

He goes on to say:

When we do so, like Jesus, God's abundance is revealed in our scarcity. God's power is shown through our weakness. God's love is released through our poor hearts.

This does not mean that everything works out miraculously in our situations of need and challenge. Sometimes what we are given is simply strength to bear up under the disappointments of life and the courage to keep on giving ourselves in the midst of the storm. Sometimes loaves and fish are multiplied beyond our wildest dreams. But the abundance of God is always there. Often hidden, but there.

Our part is self-offering: the taking, the breaking, and the giving of ourselves. The rest is up to God. Faith trusts the good that God is preparing for us, both in this life and in the life to come. "Even at the grave, we make our song, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"

When he invited the people to receive the consecrated bread at communion, Augustine of Hippo would often say,

"Be what you see;
Receive who you are."

Those words invite us to be the bread that we receive - our truest selves in Christ. They challenge us to live Eucharistic lives, lives of faithful self-offering in the service of the goodness and truth of God. For as we take our little lives and ask God to bless, break, and give them, things still happen that are beyond our wildest dreams.

And usually there is a lot left over.

I invite you to "Be what you see" and I challenge you to live Eucharistic lives.

Pax Christi !

Roy †