

Revd Michael Burns  
Christ Church West Wimbledon  
Sermon : August 2nd, 2020  
“Eighth Sunday after Trinity”

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**TRINITY 8 2020 2 August**

You don't need me to tell you how good it is to be able to be back here in church. It has been a very long time that we have been away – since March 17 in fact. Yes, we have kept going in new and different ways – but it has not been easy. But nor is it easy to be back – particularly given the restrictions under which we are compelled to worship – not least with the prohibition on singing which is probably the most difficult deprivation for us all. But at least we can be here together and that, for the moment, is probably enough. We've travelled from wherever we live to be here today.

The same was true for the people in this morning's Gospel story. Why had they bothered to leave their towns and villages to walk miles out into the country? They bothered because they knew their need of Jesus and were prepared to spend their whole day looking for him and listening to him, hanging on his words. What did Jesus do? Did he let them down or disappoint them? No, of course not! He was there for them, ready to heal the sick friends and relatives they had brought, ready to reassure them that God loved them, and teach them about how they could best please God in their lives. So, in a different way, we have come today, gathered together to be in the presence of one another and to be in the presence of Jesus, to be fed with the bread of life.

That was what happened to those 5000 all those years ago. When they began to get hungry, Jesus fed them. All he used was what they had to hand – in this case just five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus can only use what he has to hand. And in today's Church, all Jesus has to use is us.

So, a question of each one of us today. Are you a child or a young person, ready for Jesus of Nazareth to use your life? Then that's what he'll use to make lots of

other people really happy. Are you a 70 or 80 year old, ready for Jesus of Nazareth to use your life? Then that's what he'll use to bring blessing and hope to lots of other people, even if you may not realise the effect you are having on others. And it's the same as all the rest of us in between.

What about our Church? Is Christ Church ready to be used by Jesus of Nazareth? If we are, then he will use us, and many people in this area will be blessed and given hope; if we aren't, and can't be bothered to go and spend time seeking Jesus out and listening to him, then he won't be using us and the people in our community will be losing out.

Let's make sure that doesn't happen. Our task is to make ourselves available – to be channels of God's peace – and help give out to the people the gifts of God, so that all are properly fed. And we should always try to do with cheerfulness and energy.

Not so long ago, the staff at the BBC were expressing mixed feelings about the departure of one of their reporters, who was leaving the dawn shift of a morning programme to be the lead anchor for an evening programme. Asked what they would miss most about him, one insider said he is always 'cheerful and energetic' Asked what they would miss least about working with him at the crack of dawn, they admitted that even at 6am he is always 'cheerful and energetic'.

May each one of us always be 'cheerful and energetic' in our love for Jesus of Nazareth, so that what we give out to others may reflect God's love for each one of us as he brings us back to church as one family so that we can break bread together.