

## Sunday 'Spiritual Communion' in Ordinary Time

*You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place. The words in **bold** you are encouraged to say out loud as worship and prayer.*

### Opening Prayer

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members.

**We are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.**

### Opening Sentences in the Season of Ordinary Time

My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, I will wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word do I hope. We make our prayers this season...



**In the name of the Maker, who lit the world and breathed the breath of life for us  
In the name of the Son, who saved the world and stretched out his hand to us  
In the name of the Spirit, who encompasses the world and blesses our souls with yearning**

This is the Trinity of Love; God above us, God beside us, God beneath us.

### Prayers of Preparation and Confession

**Almighty God to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen**

Lord, you have called me by my name.  
You have carved me in the palm of your hand.

If God were reassuring me or challenging us, would we notice?  
Let us ask for grace to be free of our own preoccupations and open to what God may be saying to us..

We allow ourselves to think about our lives, what has been, what is, what will be ..

You may wish to pray:

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy.**



A reading from the Gospel

Read Matthew 14:13-21 (A reflection is attached to the end of the service sheet)

### Intercessions

Let us pray for the needs of the world, for our local community, and for those close to you.

End with the Lord's Prayer.

### **Our Father...**

Lord, you have engraved my name on the palm of your hand.  
Even if others forget me, you never will.

Lord You are always so much closer than we might imagine,  
Yet we often do not take the time to even imagine ...  
Help us to open our minds to your presence with us.

**O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,  
may I know you more clearly,  
love you more dearly,  
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

Life-giving God,  
heal our lives,  
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds  
and offer you thanks from generation to generation  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Blessing and Peace

May the Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**



The Peace of the Lord be always with you

## Reflection on Matthew 14:13-21 Love and Magic

Today we are asked to think about one of Jesus' miracles. A moment when Jesus, on first glance, seems to conjure from nowhere enough food to feed thousands. With our current background of scientific learning and need for proof and evidence to support our knowledge such miracles have become questionable for many people I meet. The magic of a miracle is held with some disdain. But in this disdain we miss the magic of love in action. Here in this miracle we see above all a message of love.

I want to remind us this morning that the miracles of Jesus remind us that love is magical. Not in the sense that it is about performance or fireworks and smoke but in the fact that it changes things. Love can create hope from nothing. It can fill voids which seemed to have no hope of being filled. Love is a miracle waiting to happen at so many levels.

A few years ago I officiated over a Disney themed wedding!! We all know that Walt Disney celebrated the magic of love in his films and between his heroes and heroines! Disney created magical worlds and magical stories where love took over! I reminded the couple that any magician will tell you most magic takes a lot of hard work and effort to get right. Hours of practice and learning is what makes magic so amazing. And this is true of love too.

Whilst love often first appears in the fireworks and stars that we see in a magical Disney world .. we also know that these things don't last. The smoke clears, the fireworks disappear .. the stars stop twinkling! Then in order to keep the mystery and the magic alive it takes hard work and lots of practice. It's hard work to be kind to each other when we are angry. It takes practice at being caring when someone needs us to be but we feel they don't deserve it. It's hard work to think of others before ourselves when we are tired. This is true of being a Christian in our homes, villages and communities as much as in any marriage. The miracle of Christian living is one which takes effort and practice.

You see Jesus was and still is sometimes seen as a magician by those who didn't understand him. Turning water into wine and multiplying loaves and fish all sounds quite magical doesn't it. Miraculous and magical. But the true message is that there was meaning and effort in these events which move us beyond the magical.

Jesus was tired and tested at the start of this morning's reading and still the crowds pestered Him. And the miracle begins with His capacity to still have compassion even at His own limits. Some people have suggested that the feeding of 5 thousand people is not to be seen as an act of magic but of generosity. There is the suggestion that as the young boy gave up his lunch of loaves and fish to Jesus others saw this act of love and then gave up their food too. So when Jesus blessed the limited food that was given the hearts of the crowd were moved and this started a process of sharing which met the needs of all.

Whatever view we take on the miracles of Jesus it is clear they were not an easy kind of magic or an empty kind of miracle. He always gave up something or suffered something as a result of his acts. The great miracles were amazing because they were acts of compassion and not show. Eventually it cost him his life ... and his motivation was love.