

Pastor Lauren Dow Wegner
August 6, 2017
Pentecost 9A
Matthew 14:13-21

From the moment we are born,
 We are, in some way, aware of what we don't have.
As babies,
 We cry when our tummies are empty,
 Or when we need to be changed or simply held close.
 And we are wired to cry, to shriek, so that no one can
 ignore our need.
As we grow,
 This trait of our humanity only develops further.
 We feel discontent with whoever we are,
 or whatever we have. . .
 We're just not convinced we are,
 Or have. . .
 enough.

Researcher and writer Brene Brown has dubbed this a 'culture of scarcity.' . .

 A culture of "never enough."

Brown quotes one of her favorite writers on this "never enough" culture, Lynne Twist .

 Twist notes the following:

 "For me, and for many of us, our first waking thought of the day is "I didn't get enough sleep." The next one is "I don't have enough time." Whether true or not, that thought of not enough occurs to us automatically before we even think to question or examine it. . .Before our feet touch the floor. . .we're already inadequate."

We don't have enough.
Time or money,
Creativity or opportunities,
Faith or confidence,
Friends or fun.
We don't have enough.

And clearly this isn't a mindset that recently popped up in humanity.
The disciples sound the same refrain to Jesus in our Gospel today:
"We don't have enough to feed these crowds."
In fact, they say, "We have nothing here but five loaves and
two fish."
We have nothing here.

And Jesus says, "Bring it to me."
"Bring your 'nothing' to me."
"Bring your 'not enough' to me."
Bring them here to me.

And the blessing and breaking takes place,
The lifting to heaven takes place,
And seemingly the loaves are no different than they were
before,

Because the disciples take them back from Jesus,
And there's no mention that they felt or looked
any different.

There's no indication that there were many
loaves,

Or heavier loaves at this point.

Jesus just gives them back to the disciples,
And the disciples give them to the crowds. . .

And all were filled.

All were satisfied.

All had enough. . .

More than enough.

We bring our 'not enough' to Jesus,

And he blesses it,

He breaks it,

And he gives it back to us as more than enough.

And it may not look or feel any different than it did before.

But somehow we are satisfied. . .

More than that,

We are full.

We have more than enough to be content,

to be at peace,

to be satisfied.

We may wonder what this actually looks like,

Because it sounds really great,

But is it really true?

We wonder this, because the culture of scarcity and "never enough" is
pervasive,

And our sinful nature ensures that we have more than enough doubts and questions.

How do we know that Jesus can work with our “not enough” and actually do something with it. . .

Do something with us?

We don't need to look far,
For Jesus is doing it here.

At the font, Jesus multiplies drops of simple water into a flood of saving grace. . .

When we think we aren't enough,
Or don't have enough,

Scoop up some water and feel it trickle through your fingers,

Mark yourself with the cross and let the drops drip down your face.

At baptism, we are the 'not enough' that is handed to Jesus,

And in his death and resurrection,

In a splash and a promise,

We are given more than enough. . .

We are made more than enough.

At this Table,

Jesus multiplies simple bread and wine into overflowing mercy and forgiveness,

A meal that is always ready to feed,

A table that is always open with Christ as our host.

When we think we aren't enough,

Or don't have enough,

 Come receive the bread and the wine,

 A bite and a sip that Jesus turns into a meal of
 abundance.

In Holy Communion, we bring our 'not enough' to Jesus with
empty, eager, open hands and mouths. . .

 And in his death and resurrection,

 In his body and blood,

 We are given more than enough. . .

 We are made more than enough.

Here, Jesus multiplies our feeble voices with the voices of our sisters
and brothers in praise and prayer. . .

 When we think we are not enough,

 Look at how God has given us each other!

 And by the way, we should also always be asking,

 “What voices are not here yet?

 What other voices are we called to invite and include?”

Here, in Scripture and song and prayer,

 Jesus fills us with more than enough.

 Jesus gives us each other when we don't have enough on
 our own.

And so, from the moments we are born and our shrill cries announce
the beginning of a lifetime of “not enough,”

 Jesus says, “Bring what you have.

 Bring it here to me.”

And Jesus blesses what we have,

 Breaks us free from it,

And hands us a full,
Abundant,
More-than-enough life to share.