

**Thought for the week**  
**17th Sunday of the Year (B)**  
**29th July 2018**

Today we leave aside the gospel of Mark and instead, for the next few Sundays, focus on the gospel of John.

John's gospels never seem easy to unpick. On the one hand we have a very human story of providing enough food for the hungry people gathered to listen to Jesus. Is Jesus telling us that we too need to provide food and other necessities for those in need? That would be an easy interpretation of the story but is it the only one?

Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread for the crowds to satisfy their hunger, but John follows this with '*He (Jesus) only said this to test Philip.*' In what way, then, was Jesus testing Philip?

During this period Jesus had been moving around from place to place and he was now on the far side of the Sea of Galilee. His followers moved about with him, some listening and understanding only the obvious and others trying to understand more deeply what Jesus was getting at. Today's second reading perhaps provides a clue.

This is a short extract from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians where he reminds them that there is '*One body; one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God ...*'. Is Jesus testing Philip's faith and understanding?

As one of his followers, Jesus requires us to have faith, to do as he asks of us so that over time we will come to deepen our understanding and so become true believers.

Faith is at the root of everything: through faith in Christ we can manage the seemingly impossible; Faith enables us to come to an ever deeper understanding of what it is to be truly a Christian; Faith is the power of Jesus to transform us from doubters to steadfast disciples;

Faith is about working together as a community, nourished by the eucharist, to build God's Kingdom here in our midst.

A parishioner