

Crowds to the Left, Vast Needs to Right (Mark 6:30-34 & 53-56)

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Scripture Reading: Mark 6:30-34

Jesus gang are worn out and need some respite – to chill and refresh their batteries because it was getting to much for them all

Quote: I don't mind being up to my neck in poo – it is the waves that get me!

Theme: Crowds to the Left, Vast Needs to Right – Who Do You Call?

Well you can call Ghostbusters but maybe not that helpful?

Admittedly some people might think our Christian life is a version of calling Ghostbusters!

Cartoon: The Plodder (Leunig)

You'll get left behind! – How wonderful.

You'll miss out! – How lovely.

You won't achieve your personal best! – How enjoyable.

You won't be influential! - How true.

You won't be attractive! – How divine.

You won't be clever! – How divine.

You won't know what's happening! – How peaceful.

Scripture Reading: Mark 6:53-56

Last week I learnt how MUC inoculates us from the experience of spite

Undeterred I am going to ask for your thoughts again

A little think music before I go round with the microphone

Vox Pop: When it gets a little too much who or what do you turn to keep your nostrils above the waves?

How do you replenish your spiritual reserves when the to-do list is never ending?

The two vignettes from Mark today highlight three pivots to the Christian life

- **What you make of Jesus will help your Christian life**
- **Having a gang of people for company will help your Christian life**
- **Patterns of nourishment to keep you going will help your Christian life**

Who Is Jesus For You Now?

It is okay to ponder what we make of Jesus now after all that we have experienced, learnt and unlearned!

Who Are the People in Your Gang?

Who are the folk you have found most helpful to sustaining your convictions and in particular your Christian convictions?

What Gives You Rest

Illustration: What Does It Profit (John Cooney REACH OUT 1980 - Spirituality)

Had a talk with myself last night. You're tired, I said. Tired of feeling tired of feeling tired. And all around you are others who seem to feel tired of feeling tired of feeling tired too.

Funny that.

We're tired of our hurry-up, must-go-now, artificial, glad-wrapped, televised, pre-cooked, pre-packaged, instant-fast-food, five-steps-to-whatever style of life.

Tired of studying so hard we haven't time to learn anything.

Tired of long working-

hours, and good causes, and committee reports that leave us ten minutes a month to jive (if we're lucky).

Tired of saving and planning and dreaming of a life that's stretching out behind us.

What does it profit us if we live a work-your-guts-out-sacrifice-all-dedicate-each-moment-for-God-and-others pace... and die with our legs still running, exhausted and miserable? Our epitaph shall be, "They believed fatigue is next to godliness."

When was the last time I got my feet wet?

Camped out?

Cooked porridge over a fire?

Walked through long grass?

Walked anywhere for that matter – just for the fun of it?

Marvelled at a spider's web? Breathed in a sunset?

Stared through the inky blackness of the night?

Played in the rain?

Held a leaf or a flower and let it captivate me?

Enjoyed a friendship so much I nearly burst?

Looked and saw and wondered and wondered until it crinkled my insides?

Touched creation all around me?

And sensed the Creator there?

What does it profit us if we never stop long enough to live... and to love ...?

OK. We have a dog. A ton of energy on the end of a leash. And that's where they have to stay.

To run free on a beach, charge at waves, and chase seagulls is illegal now. One day my dog

will be arrested. Our kids would love a pet rabbit, but the law says no. Same with hens and ducks and home-

grown eggs. Same with elephants, too, I bet. In

our subdivision, you're only allowed to grow short trees.

I paid half a week's salary just for water last year. Are we legislating and civilising ourselves to death?

What does it profit us if in search of the Good Life, we put great distance between ourselves and things that are little or simple or free or human... and become organised to the eyeballs, sensible, routinised, mechanised, Westernised, short-circuited, out-of-touch, numb?

Watched some people on a busy street. Tried to read their faces. They're like little cells in a magnified bloodstream – hurrying, hurrying, hurrying. They dash from one anxious moment to the next – worrying, worrying, worrying. About 'something.' Oiled, slippery cells, they move from street to shop,

from desk to office, from car to carpark. And close behind each cell is another, pushing even harder, shouting their horn and honking their heart. All this for . . . ?

What does it profit us if we have a multi-functional smartphone, the tightest schedule in human history, the speed-reading-est reputation in town, and a ten-acre block on the moon...but haven't enjoyed a poem since school, and can't remember how to play?

Found this little piece this morning.

"One blustery weekend, I was strolling with my little boy on an Atlantic beach. We were sailing clamshells into the onshore wind and watching them curve back to us. I don't know why this was fun. But on that morning, sailing clamshells seemed like the best of all possible things to do. After a while, I looked at my watch. It was lunchtime. We left the beach reluctantly. Only after we sat down to eat did I wonder why I had stopped that game. What is so important about noon? Why must we be hypnotised by the clock? My boy and I went back to the beach after lunch, but the mood was gone. The clamshells and the wind did nothing for us but blow sand in our eyes."

What does it profit us if we go out of this world not knowing why we came into it? Feeling our age. Regrets replacing dreams

What was that about "Be still and know that I am God"?

Liturgical Act: Light a candle:

As worship of what you make of Jesus for your Christian life

**In honour of the gang of people who have been important company
in your Christian life**

**As a reminder of the patterns of nourishment that keep you going in your
Christian life**

Song: *Christ in You* (Waterboys)