

We're told Jesus and His disciples were **in a desolate place**. 3 times, to make sure we know that. How would your spouse react if you said, honey, we're going away to a desolate place and find rest. Desolate because desolate places are where Jesus does His greatest work.

That's what happened then and now. What goes on there has a lot to do with now. We need to be ever reminded Jesus is still with His people to feed, nourish them, His compassion to act in their lives. How often you forget. Do you think His is off on the rim of the galaxy. Are you ever alone to struggle with fears, doubts, and bad news? As you are plagued with sin, temptations, is it ever up to you, your courage and inner strength to carry you though? You cannot even take care of you.

How could He ever ignore your pleas? And not act with compassion in your life. We never see clearly how God will accomplish His purpose or keep His promise. But we see very, very clearly our fears, limits, all our reasons and excuses that doubt our Lord to provide and care.

Mark 6:34 is one of many compelling verses that Jesus wants, expects you here every Sunday. **He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.** Our Lord pities, every single person not here -to be taught by Him here and fed by Him, to have a shepherd, pastor. Those not here not only hurt themselves, but are starving in a desolate place whether they realize it or not.

Sheep without a shepherd, a pastor is an accident waiting to happen, when a sheep is separated from the shepherd, from the flock, it's only a matter of time until you have dead meat. As it was that day with Jesus in the Galilean wilderness; still today. People at risk. People dying of spiritual malnutrition, vulnerable, open to attacks from predators. And people wander off. His heart goes out to them to satisfy a need beyond mere fish and bread.

Why are you made? why are you here? You're not just a bunch of Legos He plays with. St. Augustine is correct when he wrote, **You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.** You have intrinsic worth, your existence never meaningless. He choose to have you, your very existence is in His care, compassion. Bad news, accidents will befall this world, even your life, and in Him, in His care, with His works of compassion, a desolate place will be good day. You have a shepherd. The good news in your life are but a glimpse

of the good to come and bad news, He uses to bring a greater good.

Look around you. 11 years ago this place was a field. Who could see a building like this; a gathering here of what God alone has done. Look around you. Who thought we would need a second pastor. Well sure, thanks be to God, you just don't have only me to put-up with. Look around you. Look in your life. Before you are quick to resign to all that has happened, make excuses, despair over issues -do not underestimate God's compassion to act.

The point of all the stuff of creation, even simple bread and fish; all of your resources have meaning, value, and power only in the hands of God, as He uses it to take care of you. Trust the Lord. He leads you. You will not be disappointed. You will be satisfied in His Kingdom, what He brings, what He gives; forgiven, taught and fed. In Him, good news for you; everyday your story always, a good ending. Everyday, tell yourself, today is a good day to have a good day. Only because: **Lord You open your hand, satisfy the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all His ways, kind in all His works.**

Taking care of you, still providing. His compassion for the crowds still today that they be given pastors. His sheep still need to be taught, fed, protected, cared for. He still tells His pastors, **you give them something to eat.** I can't, but He still provides the food, abundant and overflowing.

**And they were satisfied. echortasthesan.** Not just satisfied like from a good meal from mom or a nice restaurant, but the word echortasthesan means complete. This is you. The feeding of 1000s foreshadowed the far, far greater miracle feeding from His altars, food not of this world. That you be fed, filled, complete in Him, with what He brings. And you are, overflowing, satisfies you like nothing else can by His Word, Sacrament to sustain you in this desolate world.

He gives rest, rest we so desperately need, takes care of you, with pastors sent to attend to you in the Church He creates for you. This is the foundation proclaimed by the prophets and apostles, the truth upon which we stand. There is no other truth. And that makes all the difference in a desolate place. His compassion for you still moves Him to act in your life. Be at rest in Him dear child; be satisfied in only what He gives.