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## From +John...

Tēnā koutou katoa e hoa ma

Two days ago, I attended the AGM of the New Zealand Bible Society. I continue to be amazed with the work of the Bible Society whose mission is to ***“help make the Bible accessible to everyone and encourage interaction with it.”*** For example, in the last 12 months in New Zealand 4,274 Bibles; 50,649 Scripture passages in various forms; as well as 1,421 Bibles, New Testaments and resources were given away to people in hospital and 2,439 Bibles and New Testaments given away in New Zealand Prisons.

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July in his Angelus Address Pope Francis began by saying ***“the first bread that Jesus offers the hungry and lost crowd is the bread of the Word.”*** The Pope was referring to the Gospel of the day (Mark 6:30-34). After their first mission, the Apostles returned to Jesus and told him ***“all that they had done and taught”*** (v30). It would have been exciting time for them, but it was also tiring, they needed rest. Jesus, full of understanding, is concerned about giving them some relief and says: ***“Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while”*** (v. 31). However, the plans Jesus had were thwarted and couldn't be realized because the crowd, guessing where He would have gone with his disciples, got there before Jesus did.

The same thing can happen to us today. Sometimes we don't succeed in carrying out our projects because unforeseen events upset our plans and require of us flexibility and availability to the needs of others.

We are then called to imitate what Jesus did: ***“As He landed He saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things”*** (v. 34). Pope Francis said we can sum up Jesus' actions with three verbs ***to see, to have compassion, to teach***. It's what we do as followers of Jesus, it's also what the Bible Society does. I am impressed and very grateful for what they do.

We see a need in those who are hungering for something more...for God's Word. We have compassion, and look for ways to provide that food, and, we teach.

Jesus was moved when he saw all those people in need of guidance and help. We may have expected a miracle. Instead, Jesus began to teach them many things. He offered a hungry and lost crowd the bread of the Word. All human beings need the word of truth, which guides us and illumines the way. Without the truth, which is Christ himself, it's not possible to find the right direction of life.

May the word of God touch the depths of our hearts in such a way that we too may have compassion, look for ways to provide the hungry and the lost the bread of God's word and teach them the Word of Truth.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga o te Ariki ki runga i (ā koe, a kōrua, a koutou)

+John

- **Farewell and Thanks to His Excellency Archbishop Martin Krebs, Apostolic Nuncio.** Very soon Archbishop Krebs will complete his term as the Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand and the Pacific Islands and take up a new post in Uruguay. We thank him for his five years with us and offer all good wishes and every blessing in his new posting.
- **Congratulations to the Compassion Soup Kitchen.** Last week the Compassion Soup Kitchen were acknowledged as the supreme winners of the Wellington Airport Community Awards. We give sincere thanks to the Sisters of Compassion, staff and hundreds of volunteers who have been serving meals at the Soup Kitchen since 1899.

**We must not only pause to reflect upon passages from the Bible, but upon 'slices of life' too, relating them together, and to the will of the Risen Christ for us**

Michel Quiost.