

Thanksgiving is just 2 weeks away! I remember a Thanksgiving visit with my mom and dad when my 2 children were in elementary school. Living in Regina, my parents often trekked to Calgary for a visit at Thanksgiving and Easter rather than risk winter roads at Christmas. My mom always took over the kitchen and gave me a break. What a wonderful blessing that was! I remember one evening when grandma called out from the dining room: "Anybody who helps me set the table will get a quarter!" Remember that was the 1990's so small change went further.

One grandson rushed down to help. The other one came out of the TV room and asked "How much Grandma?" Grandma answered, "A quarter!" There was a pause in the conversation. And then, very politely, one of her beloved grandsons said, "No thanks Grandma. I have enough money". And that grandson went back to watch TV.

I have enough!

At one time, John D. Rockefeller was one of the richest men in the world. A newspaper reporter once asked him this question: "How much money is enough?" Mr. Rockefeller responded: "Just a little bit more."

Our scripture reading for this 'At Home Worship Experience' is from the book of Exodus. And it is all about not enough, just a little bit more, and enough. This story begins not long after the Jewish people escaped Egyptian slavery and crossed the Red Sea. And now they had run out of the food they had brought with them. They were tired, scared, and very hungry. In response to their cries for help, God told Moses that God would rain down bread from heaven for the people. That evening quail came and covered the camp. The people captured them and there was food to eat. And then the next morning, when the dew evaporated, a white substance covered the ground.

Moses explained that this was also food. And it came to be known as 'manna'... the ancient Hebrew phrase meaning "What is it?" He instructed the people to gather an omer or just about 4 litres worth for each person each day. Now when some folk gathered more because they were worried there wouldn't be enough for tomorrow, that little bit of extra manna became wormy and spoiled except on Fridays. Saturday was the Sabbath when the people honored God by doing no work and resting. So on Fridays, Moses told them to gather a double portion because it wouldn't appear on the Sabbath. Even God needed a day off from work. That extra portion never spoiled. After the people gathered the manna, they made it into flour by grinding it, then boiled it in pots, and then finally baked as flat cakes. Apparently, they tasted like pastries sweetened with honey and a hint of olive oil.

Exodus says that the people ate manna every day for 40 years. There was always enough. When Joshua and the people came to the border of Canaan and ate the food of the Promised Land, the heaven sent manna stopped the next day and was never seen again.

Over the years, those people came to know that in the midst of their anxieties, fears, and challenges that God heard their needs and provided. In the New Testament, you will find a letter written by the apostle Paul to a small church located in a place called Philippi in north eastern Greece. Paul wanted to remind them that they are not alone facing the challenges of following the teachings of Jesus. And so he writes the following words: I pray that God will take care of all your needs with the wonderful blessings that come from Christ Jesus!"

When we say the words "Give us this day our daily bread" in the Lord's Prayer, we are reminding ourselves that the same God who sent manna is the same God who will hear our worries, anxieties, and fears and will help us to find the kind of manna we need to sustain and nourish our lives each and every day.

Let us pray: God, give us this day our daily bread. Offer us the nutrients we need to remain connected to you. As spiritual beings, we desire to receive food that endures - faith, hope, and love. God, give us this day our daily bread. All life is created and nourished by you. May we grow into new circles of understanding and being, reflecting the ways in which we have been touched by your holy manna. Holy Spirit, come. Give us this day our daily bread. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.