Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – 17th Sunday of the Year 2018

"…then Andrew said to Jesus, 'there's a boy here with five barley loaves and two fish.'"

That's the sentence from our Gospel reading that you and I will reflect upon this morning.

But before we do, allow me please to repeat to you a small snippet from our second reading which I think is a beautiful blueprint on how to live our life: "Live with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity through the bond of peace." When I hear those words a great calm comes over me. When I hear those words, the presence of God comes over me. If you and I live with humility, gentleness, patience; if you and I bear with one another in love, if you and I preserve unity and peace, then you and I will be God's instruments of healing, so much

needed in our increasingly vulgar, decaying society. Now, believe it or not, that segues right into this sentence upon which were gonna reflect from our Gospel this morning when "…Andrew told Jesus, 'there's a boy here with five barley loaves and two fish.'" Jesus used that boy as his instrument for the miracle of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish. In the time of Jesus, children were the lowest rung of the social scale. Children were not considered to be important at all, except for Jesus. Everyone was important to Jesus. SO, if you think they are not important, you're wrong! Some years ago, a woman asked me to pray for her because she had just been diagnosed with cancer. After spending time in the hospital undergoing all kinds of tests and treatments, she was declared cancer free. The doctors told her that it seemed miraculous. She asked: "Why me, who am I that a miracle should occur to me? I'm a nobody!" Is that how you think of yourself sometimes, is that how you think of yourself all the time, that "I'm nobody?" Cardinal Newman tells us that each of us is a link in a chain. If even one link is missing, the chain is broken and it is useless. Cardinal Newman tells us that God has set aside a specific task for each of us to be his instrument. You, and only you, can do that task. You might never know what it is, but if you don't do it, it doesn't get done! So, not only are you not a nobody, you are an indispensable somebody – we ALL are! When I was a newly ordained priest, one day a woman told me, "Father, I'm twenty-nine years old, for the first time in my life I have fallen deeply in love. I am sure that this is the guy that God wants me to marry. And I am sure that this the guy that I want to marry. But there is a serious problem, I am a functioning

but active alcoholic. The man told me that he's deeply in love with me, but he won't even consider marrying me until I first go to AA or a twelve step program, attain sobriety and then a year or so after that we can talk about getting married. Father, I have no hope of getting sober, let alone staying sober!" In the midst of her tears, "Of course you can't do it alone, but you are not alone. With the grace of God and the help of our Blessed Mother, and with the support of AA, you can defeat the terrible disease of alcoholism." And I promised that I would pray for her every day. Well, to cut to the chase, about fifteen months after that, I was the priest at her wedding. That is over forty-five years ago and to this day, she and her husband swear that it's all because of me! Now of COURSE it wasn't all because of me! I was God's instrument! That's who I was and so are you! I was only one instrument, one link in the chain. But if even one link is missing, everything falls apart. Each link is essential, each of us is essential. Soo, when you leave church this morning, hold your head high, because not only are you not a nobody, you are an indispensable somebody, just as the boy with the five barley loaves and two fish!