

**Covenant & Compassion: Part One**  
**Questions for Discussion & Reflection**  
**106<sup>th</sup> Annual Council of the Diocese of West Texas**  
**Friday Afternoon, February 19, 2010**

Read Mark 6:30-37:

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all they had done and taught. And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest awhile.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them. As Jesus went ashore 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. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a lonely place, and the hour is now late; send them away, to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat.” But Jesus answered them, “You give them something to eat.”

- 1.) Discuss a word, phrase or idea from the passage from Mark or from the presentation that speaks most deeply or loudly to you.
- 2.) Most of us like to think of ourselves as pretty competent. How hard is it for you to see yourself as needing Jesus’ compassion?  
What might be the promises of welcoming that compassion? What might be the challenges?
- 3) In the Mark passage, and in the earlier passage from Matthew, Jesus clearly expects and empowers his disciples to do as he does (“You feed them,” “He gave them authority over unclean spirits...and to heal.”) What are the challenges or obstacles to following Jesus in his compassionate ministry?  
What are the promises?

## **Covenant & Compassion: Part Two**

### **Questions for Discussion & Reflection**

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**Friday Afternoon, February 19, 2010**

#### **Read this passage from St. Matthew's Gospel**

Jesus said: "Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'" (Matthew 25:34-40)

- 1) Talk about a word, a phrase, or an idea from the passage from St. Matthew or the presentation that speaks deeply or loudly to you.
- 2) In your daily life, where are you most often called to practice compassion? What makes that possible? What makes it difficult?
- 3) Consider your church and your community. What "strategies of compassion" are used to strengthen the church's practice of compassion? Where is there suffering within your community that your church might effectively enter into with compassion? What is necessary for that to happen?
- 4) What persistent or looming "interruptions" might become opportunities in which your church can serve with compassion?