

## SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

(Often called “STIR-UP Sunday”)

### THE COLLECT

*STIR UP, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of they faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

1. What do we beseech (beg) God to stir up?  
A. The \_\_\_\_\_ of His faithful people

\*In Psalm 119:88 we read: *Quicken me after thy loving kindness: so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth. (KJV)*  
The Psalmist is also praying that his will be “stirred-up” or “quickened.”

2. What ought God’s faithful people plenteously to bring forth?  
A. The \_\_\_\_\_ of good works

List (9) of these fruits as found in Galatians 5:22-23:

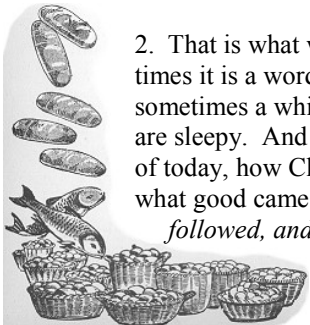
3. When we plenteously bring forth the fruit of good works, what may we humbly expect?  
A. To be plenteously \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 6:35, what does St Luke tell us to do which will result in a great reward?

### INTRODUCTION.

1. When we have kept on in the same course a long time we are apt to grow weary. We want stirring up. So it is at the end of this long season of Trinity. God has been teaching us how to serve Him, but we are apt to get careless. So the need for this last prayer. “Stir up the wills,” &c.

2. That is what we mean by an *impulse*—something to *stir us* up. Sometimes it is a word of encouragement, sometimes a promise of reward, sometimes a whip for the horse, sometimes a shake to wake us when we are sleepy. And we shall learn from the chapter, which is the Holy Gospel of today, how Christ stirred up His apostles, what it led them to do, and what good came of their doing it. In other words—God’s impulses *felt, followed, and fruitful.*



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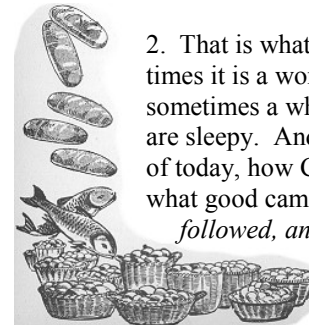
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**READ: John 6:4-15**

**I. GOD'S IMPULSES FELT.**

1. We need our wills to be stirred up. They get sluggish, dull, weary, and we are tempted to give up or get slack. Like a fire left to itself; it needs stirring up, or it will go out.
2. How did Christ stir up the wills of the apostles? He showed them the need, made them feel with Him compassion for the hungry, told them what to do, encouraged and quickened their faith.
3. How does He stir up our wills? Just in the same way. Sometimes in what we read-or hear, sometimes in what we see, He shows us the needs of people. The suffering and want around us which we see, the need for missionaries, of which we read and hear, are all to stir up our wills. God shows us what we can do and strengthens our faith.

**II. GOD'S IMPULSES FOLLOWED UP.**

1. This is very needful.  
A fire may be stirred up and still go out; a man may be stirred up and still go to sleep again. So God's impulses must be followed up.
2. How did the Apostles follow up?  
They found the boy and led him to bring his small gifts to Christ. They put the people in order, and so led them to expect a blessing. they distributed the food, and gathered up the fragments.
3. How can we follow up God's impulses?
  1. Like the boy who gave up his loaves and fishes to Christ, we can bring our gifts, our money, our powers, however small, and ask Him to use them.
  2. We can also be like the apostles, channels of blessing to others
  3. We can also remember today to gather up the fragments, i.e. to make the best use of the time and opportunity left to us and recall what we have learned
4. Following God's impulses brings forth fruit
  1. Because the disciples followed God's impulse, many people were fed, and all, including the disciples learnt more of Christ than they knew before.



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