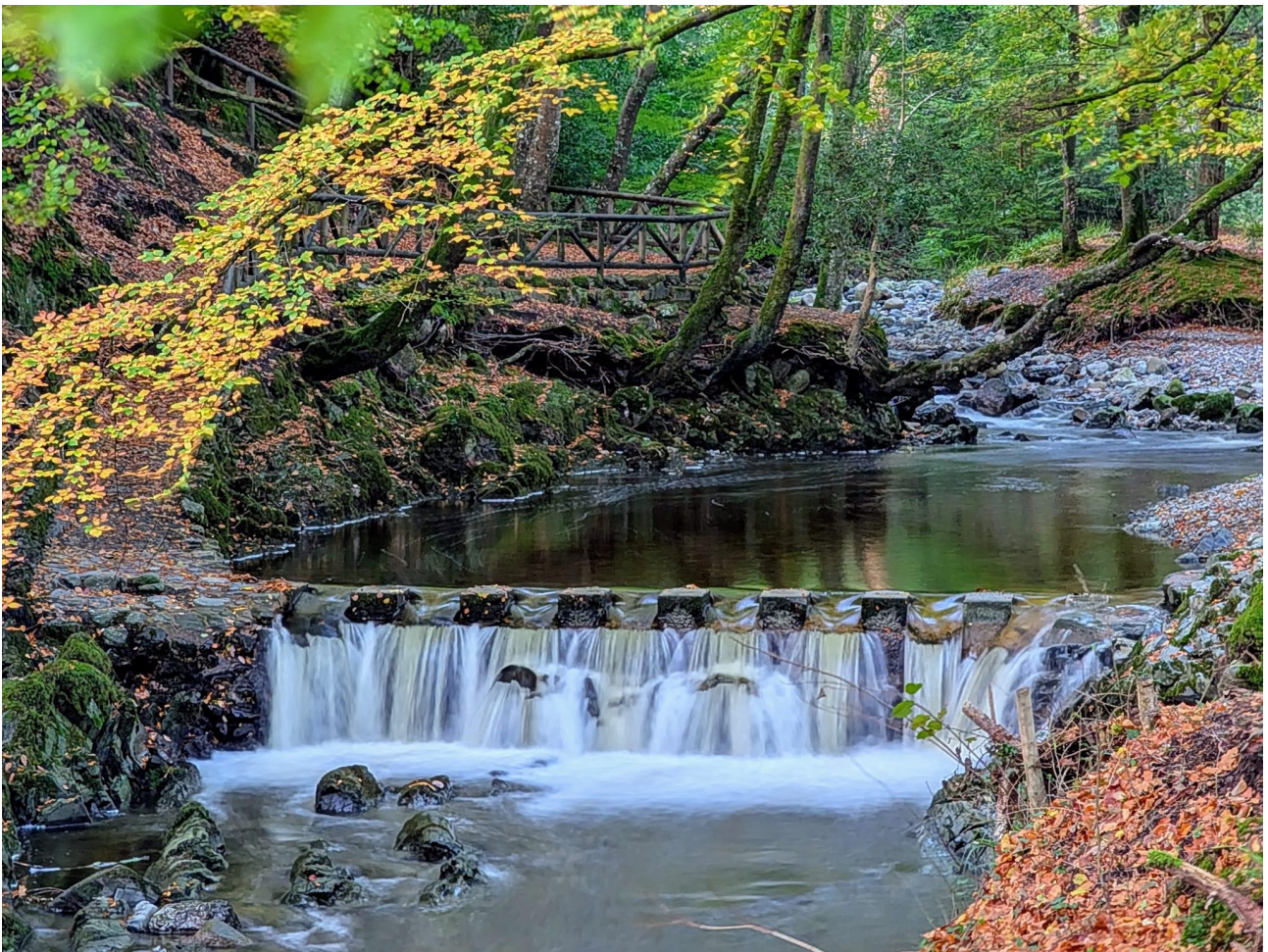


Speaking to the soul



Challenges

**“But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!”
[the disciples] answered. Matthew 14:17**

Jesus had just told his disciples to feed the vast crowd. They were understandably overwhelmed by the challenge. How on earth were they going to do it? They pointed out the absurdity of the situation. Anyone could see that they

couldn't possibly feed the thousands of hungry people with such meagre resources. The problem with the disciples was they hadn't counted on Jesus. They looked at the little packed lunch that they had available to them and concluded that the situation was completely hopeless.

We all know the end of the story. Jesus blessed the loaves and fishes and there was not only enough food to feed the crowd, but plenty left over. What the disciples had to learn was that however apparently inadequate their resources, they needed to put them into Jesus' hands for him to bless. I am quite sure that, in later life, they often reflected on that amazing day. The disciples faced massive challenges as the mission of the Church opened up in the coming years. Their tiny resources seemed trivial in the face of the might of the Roman Empire and the violent opposition that they were going to confront. But as they placed their lives in God's hands and sought his blessing, amazing miracles were going to take place, well beyond anything that was humanly possible.

When you look at your community you may sometimes feel overwhelmed by the challenge. You have been commissioned to make disciples and to baptise the people you live among. But if you are serious about Jesus' commission and are taking the good news out to people you will often face rejection and ridicule. Your church's resources might seem totally inadequate. So, remember that your mission belongs to Jesus and not to you, and that he is able to take whatever you place in his hands, however small, and bring about a miracle.

QUESTION

What are you going to do when you next feel overwhelmed by the challenges that your church is facing?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, I commit what I am and have into your hands and trust you to do a miracle when you deem it necessary. Amen