

**Service to Community**    Second Week of Easter    Saturday, April 14, 2018    8:15 AM  
**Acts 6:1-7;**    Jn 6:16-21    (We still are people who need to listen to each other and respond to needs.)

Today we have the story of the early community in Jerusalem, and complaining. **It seems whenever you have a community, you have complaining;** someone is not happy. In this case we have various widows who are being taken care of by the community. Now the apostles were more or less in charge of the community. What the community did was they pooled their assets. They didn't have a lot of assets, so there wasn't much to pool, but there was a pool. **The apostles distributed the assets according to people's needs from various tables.** Now some people think that serving tables has to do with serving food. No, it's taking care of the assets of the community.

Well now the **Greek speaking people complain that their widows were being neglected.** Well you know how this works. The people who are doing the work know certain people more than others, they have relatives who come to them, and so on. Well the upshot of this was the apostles said, you know what, that's really not even our job. By the way, the Hellenists, the Greek speaking, you are not really doing anything. We will appoint some of the Greek speaking people to do this work. And that is really very wise. **When people complain, give them a job.** That's how the community has functioned through the ages. So they decided to call forth Greek named people. All these are Greek names: Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicholas of Antioch—**Greek speaking people who are now going to be authorized to do the work of distribution of goods.**

Some say this is the origin of the Order of Deacon, although the word "deacon" does not appear here. But the word "serve" is found here, serve tables. **So is this the Order of Deacons?** Maybe, maybe not. Later on it became a paradigm that people used, **the model people used, to describe this order in the Church,** which was first and foremost **an order of service, of caring for the needs of people, all kinds of needs: health needs, physical needs, spiritual needs.** What I think Luke wants us to know is that we are the successors of this early community. Even though many circumstances have changed, **we still are people who need to listen to each other and respond to needs.** And **everyone has to be involved somehow in the service part of human community.**