

**Don had a lot of loves in his life. He loved his family, and especially his 2 girls. He loved his friends. He loved rock music. Let me correct that – he loved loud rock music. And he loved a certain 1973 Mustang. He loved the friends who stuck with him through thick and thin. And I am sure he loved being alive. He must have treasured every day in ways the rest of us can't.**

**It is good of you all to come out this morning to show your love for Don and his family. He was a walking miracle, and he inspired us with his determination, his conviction and his generosity. God gave a lot to Don, and Don gave a lot to other people. When people give as spontaneously and kindly as Don did throughout his life, they help others give as well, and they make us want to reach out in love at times like this.**

**This story of the loaves and fish comes up in our church calendar this week because we are celebrating Epiphany at this time of year. Most people think of epiphany as the day the magi visited the Christ child, offering him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Fittingly, this feast has something to do with generosity, but it has more to do with manifestation. God revealed the only Son, Jesus, to the nations, represented by the magi coming from a distant land. God not only sent us a gift – he revealed the gift to the world on that first epiphany. Throughout this week in our church we hear other gospel stories about how the adult Jesus revealed himself as the Son of God. One of those stories is the multiplication of the loaves.**

**One day a vast crowd came to hear Jesus, and the disciples got nervous. "Send them home," they said, "because we cannot feed them." "Sure you can," Jesus said, "give them some food yourselves." "We can't afford it," they said. Jesus asked, "What do you have? How many loaves do you have?" They check, and they tell him, "Five. And 2 fish." That's all Jesus needed. He fed 5000, and he had baskets left over.**

**When Don ended up in a hospital room in 1983, some people, good people, probably would have advised the Rooney family to tell God, "Take him home. We can't take care of him. We can't afford it." But Jesus has experience. He could do wonders with 5 loaves and 2 fish, and he could do even more wonders with Don. Who of us has not given thanks to God for so generously taking care of our brother and our friend?**

**Don lived a difficult life, but he never ceased to amaze us and he never ceased to love us. Today we commend him to the one who loved him first, to God who is love, to God who "was revealed to us. God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son."**