

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 13
Gospel Lesson for Older Children

Scripture: Matthew 14:13-21

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus' ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word "ordinal" which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel and Reading

Today's Gospel lesson is one version of the well-known story about the feeding of the 5,000. It is so well known, we may not pay attention to it, but we have much to learn from it. The feeding of the 5,000 is more than a story about fishes and loaves. It is about Jesus' compassion. It is about Jesus teaching the disciples how to feed people. It is about the generosity sharing what was there and being overwhelmed with the abundance. It is a foreshadowing of the last supper where Jesus also takes bread, breaks it, and shares it. What can we learn anew from this well-known story? Where can we feed others and where are we being fed?

Theme: Being Fed and Feeding Others

Before Class: You will need copies of today's reading, watercolor paper, watercolors, small cups of water, paint brushes and paper towels.

Beginning: Invite the group to gather together. Invite them to share an example of being fed when they were hungry.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what your words mean for our lives. Help us to understand how we are fed by you and by those around us each day. Amen.

The Scripture: Matthew 14:13-21

You will need five readers today to read verses 13-14, 15, 16-18, 19, and 20-21.

Questions:

- I wonder what this Gospel stirs in us?
- I wonder what questions this Gospel brings up for us?
- This is a well-known story, what did you hear differently this time?
- This story about Jesus feeding us out of abundance is at its heart a miracle story. Where do you see Jesus feeding you today?
- What miracles have you witnessed in your life?
- Where are you being fed that you did not expect to be fed?

Activity: Feeding Others

Part of this story is that someone had five loaves and two fish that they were willing to share with the crowd. Out of this small offering, all were fed. This is a story about food, but also about compassion and sharing with those around you.

Let's think about all the things we have in our lives that we can share with others. (food, clothes, school supplies, etc.)

Give them time to brainstorm.

Once they have a list, invite them to come up with an action plan of how they might share these things with others.

Being Fed

Invite the children to create a watercolor picture of how God, Jesus, and others have fed them either with food, love, or something else.

Getting Closure: Invite them to share what they created. If you have time they can also share where they are being fed unexpectedly AND how they can feed others from what they already have.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, help us understand your words and stories so that we can hold onto the gift of your message. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

Matthew 14:13-21

¹³Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.

¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” ¹⁷They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” ¹⁸And he said, “Bring them here to me.”

¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

²⁰And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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