

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Season after Pentecost, Proper 13
Gospel Lesson for Younger 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 clay or playdough and paper.

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

When Jesus heard about John the Baptist, he got in a boat and went away by himself. But soon word got out about where he had gone and people from the villages walked around the lake to find him. When he saw them coming, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. However, evening was coming and it was close to dinnertime. The disciples said to Jesus, "We are out here in the country and it is getting late. Send the people back to the village so they can get some dinner. Jesus said, "We do not need to send them away. You give them something to eat." They told him that they only have five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus told them to bring him the loaves and fish.

Then Jesus had them sit on the grass and he took the bread and fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed it, broke it, and gave the bread to the disciples. The disciples gave the food to the

congregation and all ate until they were full. When everyone was done eating, they gathered 12 baskets of leftovers. That day, about 5,000 were fed.

Questions:

- I wonder what you liked best about this story?
- I wonder what made you ask questions?
- I wonder how much food it would take to feed 5,000 people?
- I wonder if it is a miracle that they could feed so many people?
- This story about Jesus feeding people food. I wonder what other things Jesus gives us? (Compassion, love, joy, etc.)

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 create those things out of clay. They can also create the loaves and fishes as a reminder of the story.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to clean up their area. Invite them to share what they created.

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.

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