

# Trinity News

## Pentecost VIII

### The Feeding of the Five Thousand Mark 6:30-44

This miracle, found in all four Gospels, has connections with the “feeding” at the Last Supper. That is, the actions there of taking, blessing, breaking and giving/receiving are formative in the patterns of our Eucharistic Liturgies.

The connection with the Last Supper is crucial for the interpretation of the feeding of the five thousand offered in John’s Gospel, where the language is incomprehensible apart from the meal in the Upper Room in Jerusalem (John 6:1-15; cf. 25-40). This connection is made well before the Supper by Christ, though it is surely affirmed by the Gospel writer who looks back from the Supper to the evolving pattern of the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

The miracle occurs in the context of a meal. It is after all a meal between Jesus and his friends. The entry of the presence of God to bring abundance is presumed, though the actual multiplication of the loaves and fishes is not described. Like the resurrection, the actual occurrence is not defined. How could it be defined? Jesus is the agent of a creative act that brings abundance and full stomachs: “And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish” (Mark 6:43). This comment points to the abundance of the provision. Did Christ help them to gather the fragments? After all, he shares in our brokenness.

This is one of those occasions where Jesus seeks to find some peace for himself. He finds a deserted place. It is one of those moments when we can stop and allow the peace that we all need to seep into our souls to prepare ourselves for what might come. The crowd hear about this and they follow him on foot. They needed someone and he needed space. This often happens in life and there is a tension there. We need to be available for people and to be able to take opportunities to meet their needs. Nothing should be allowed to prevent us from meeting another person's need except when common-sense matters dictate themselves to

us with force because of their reasoned reality. So he went ashore to a great crowd and immediately expressed compassion for them and cured their sick. He immediately turns to other people's needs. He does not reprimand them for disturbing him. He goes straight away to meet the people and he shows them compassion and heals those who are sick. It is not a problem.

There is something fearful in being hungry, as we see the seasonal drought affected areas in Africa and the huge needs and the suffering of humanity around the globe. The tormented faces of the children haunt us. The intention is to show that there is so much that we depend upon. The universe around us is so self-supporting that at times we fail to recognize that it is very fragile, though resilient. Just a degree of temperature here or there or a misalignment of something can create havoc. It is likely that the story is told with the intention of allowing us to enter the provenance of God to enjoy the stream of providential grace streaming from the heart of God.

**Bishop Arthur Jones**

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### **THIS WEEK:**

*July 24, Tuesday.*

- Bible Study, 10am

*July 26, Thursday.*

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel.



### **NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:**

2 Kings 2:1-15

Psalm 114

Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16

Mark 6:45-52