

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost VI A Gospel Movie Set Near Lake Galilee in Palestine.

The Characters and the Plot

The setting of the Feeding of the Five Thousand is by the picturesque Lake Galilee in Palestine. The lake view is like holding water in a long basin in one's hand, but much larger. Sometimes Bishops in pilgrim groups are asked to re-commemorate the occasion by linking it at a place called Santa Mesa with a celebration of the Christian Eucharist. The smooth stone "holy table" there marks two Suppers at evening in Galilee.

The feeding of the five thousand is a miracle of the ordinary touched by Spirit. Jesus was conscious of the total needs of a person. We have a lot of 'actors' in our world with their plot of earth as their stage. They perform, they don't function for the greater good. What they want and what they feel are not connected to the needs of those around them. They are performing in their own movie and it is for their benefit. The movie screen is empty until the characters and scenes and story plots of the movie appear on it. When the projector is switched off the screen is empty again. What remains are the connections made with our own story by the performances of the characters in bringing out the inner heart of the story. It is like that in the Gospel stories, though we do have part of the script in the Gospels and we never stop looking at it.

The characters in this story are Jesus and his disciple and a cast of thousands who followed him. The disciples had learned something of the art of giving from Jesus because they don't mention their own needs, only the hunger of the followers and onlookers. Jesus' own needs are not mentioned. **If we think only of our own needs and wants we will never see the needs and desires of others.**

The disciples look for a practical solution by suggesting that they go into the surrounding villages but they also doubt whether they have enough money to buy the food that is needed. Jesus' reaction is to ask the people to sit down and then he calls out directly to God to provide sustenance for the people using a few loaves and fishes. This story in the Gospel of John links the feeding of the 5000 and their families to the giving of the *manna* in the wilderness to feed the wandering people of Israel. The chief actor in this drama has never been forgotten. The cast has no names, though we

know the names of the inner disciples of Jesus. The provision of God always exceeds expectations if we have eyes to see and ears to hear. This is represented in what is left over after the meal in the filling of 12 baskets. Biblical scribes have long pondered about whether this is a miracle or not and what it really means. Look first at the one who calls on the generosity of God. He is a miracle in himself in that God is so transparent in him. A miracle is something in which God is transparent. Look at the faces of the people and see yourself there as a disciple, feeding those who are hungry and seeing the gratitude on their faces. **Beauty has as much to do with character in the face and luminous thoughts on the eyes of the person as it has to do with beauty of face and body.** Jesus saw it all that day and he responded. In this connection I treasure the words of Teresa of Avila, a very practical mediaeval saint:

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on the world; yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.” Amen!

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10:00am.
- Group Discussion, 7:00pm, Parish Office

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

2 Kings 2:1-15; Psalm 114; Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16; Mark 6:45-52