

Pastor David Anglada' Message Outline

“A World Without Want”

Matthew chapter 14 verses 13 to 21

August 2, 2020

The Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

Grace Lutheran Church and School

Malverne, New York

www.glcas.org

¹³ Now 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. ¹⁴ When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵ When 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." ¹⁶ Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷ They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸ And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹ Then 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. ²⁰ And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.¹

Let us Pray: Lord of Mercy, you ask us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, protect the vulnerable. Yet the poor Christ cries for bread and seeks a welcome all around us. Give us the grace to repent this sin and to change our hearts, In Jesus' name we pray. Amen²

Thank you for joining us today, before I start my Sunday's message, I would like to read verses 10-12 from chapter 14 from Matthew's gospel. Verses 10- 12 will give us clarity to our Gospel text today: **he sent and had John beheaded in prison. The head was brought on a platter and given to the girl who brought it to her mother. His disciples came and took the body and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.**

When you hear bad news, what happens to you, or how do you react? Some people cry some become idle or frozen in time; others withdraw upon hearing unpleasant news.

In our Gospel story today, Jesus withdrawal upon hearing news of the death of his family member John the Baptist. No wonder Jesus seeks to be alone to mourn the death of John the Baptist. Many would argue that Jesus also withdraws from everyone to escapes danger for himself and his disciples.

We are informed that Jesus is not the only one to hear the horrible news of John's unmerited death at Herod's hands. The people are understandably scared and are seeking Jesus for both comfort and support.³

At times I wonder, how did Jesus feel, or better yet, what thoughts went through his mind? Or did he sense his imminent death? Jesus' withdrawal by boat coupled with the crowd's following by foot makes a clear contrast: Jesus is perceived as a threat by leaders of the community or, and Herod.

As Jesus comes ashore and sees a large crowd, he is moved with compassion, as well as restoring to health all who needed healing for their infirmities. Furthermore, Jesus knows what they are going through. Our Lord truly knew and understood their daily struggles. Most of the people who followed Jesus were sick, poor, despised, oppressed, homeless, and they were hungry, coupled with living on the margins of society.

Many the followers of Jesus were marginalized. Our blessed Lord Jesus sees their longing for hope together with a word of encouragement.⁴ Jesus spends the day teaching, being present, and having conversations with the crowd. As the famous expression goes, he felt their pain.

As the evening approaches, the disciples tell Jesus that the people need to eat, please, send them away so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves. Well, **surprise, surprise, surprise**, Jesus tells his apprentices, "feed them yourselves." But Lord, we do not have anything here but five loaves plus two fish.

It is my hunch that several things are taking place in our Gospel story: First, the disciples are not able to see beyond their five loaves of bread and two fish. Secondly, they had a myopic vision. Thirdly, the disciples try to doge the responsibilities of doing ministry with the people. Equally important, they forgot the teachings of Jesus, "I was hungry, and you gave me to eat." They forgot to use the gifts that Jesus had given them the gift of healing and miracles. Frequently throughout the four gospels, Jesus himself had done the healing and transforming, but on this occasion, our blessed Lord Jesus calls the "disciples to stop and reject the myth of scarcity."⁵

The disciples seem to have forgotten the many miracles they had witnessed by being present with Jesus, their mentor. The disciples seem to suffer from temporary amnesia; they forgot the ancient stories of the past on how God provided manna and water for the Hebrew people in the wilderness when they left Egypt. Additionally, Elijah and Elisha supply bottomless jars of oil or abundant barley loaves for food-insecure families.

Jesus gives them the solution that they need, "bring me the bread and fish;" can you hear the disciples whispering to each other, here we go again, we should have known better, we should have handled this situation ourselves.

"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. And all ate

and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.”⁶

In our gospel passage, Jesus is inviting his disciples and his followers to take responsibility for one another. Today, the gospel is also speaking to us to help each other out when a need arrives, especially people in our communities who are food deprived.

My good friends, we can experience daily miracles when you and I put share our bread and fish with the world. With the help of God, we can have a world without want, a world without hunger, a world without homelessness when you and I renounce the message of scarcity and turn to God in faith, offering what we have and allowing God to bless and multiply even the smallest of gifts. People of God, we have been so blessed by God. Count your blessings, name them one by one, count your blessings, see what God hath done.

Think about this for a moment; it only took five loaves of bread and two fish to feed five thousand men, besides women and children. So, if you and I join our resources together, we can feed the masses of hungry people in our community, and in our world, we can have a world without want. Its simple arithmetic, which can cause a miracle to happen, a dollar, here a dollar there will supply a significant number of hungry children and adults.

I take this opportunity to share some facts about poverty and hunger in America⁷

Even in the world's greatest food-producing nation, children and adults face poverty and hunger in every county across America.

- The coronavirus pandemic has left millions of families without stable employment. More than 54 million people, including 18 million children, may experience food insecurity in 2020.
- More than 38 million people are living in poverty in America. In 2019, most families living in poverty earned less than \$25,750 per year.
- A household that is food insecure has limited or uncertain access to enough food to support a healthy lifestyle.
- Children are more likely to face food insecurity than any other group in the United States.

Beloved in the Lord; if we share what we have so, that everyone may have enough. And if we work toward being a society that seeks justice for all its members so that no one goes hungry. Let us live in a world without want.

While working on today's message, I observed the following: Jesus was sensing the crowds, he was aware of the present, the people needed food, and he took action once, the disciples could not figure what to do. Secondly, Jesus was feeling the emotional and physical needs of the

people; he had empathy for his followers. Thirdly, Jesus functioned with order and precision. Finally, Jesus did the following: he took the loaves; he looked up to heaven and say's the traditional blessing, Jesus broke the loaves, he gave the loaves of bread to the disciples. These same actions were repeated in Matthew chapter 26 at the Last Supper.⁸

I leave you with the following questions: Are we able to feel the emotional and physical needs of people. Do we have empathy like Jesus for the least of these? What needs exist in your community, and how can you be responsive to them?

Prayer of Response to the Proclaimed Word: Providing God, we thank you for feeding us with your Word, so that we may be filled with the bread of life and feed others. Amen.

ENDNOTES

¹ New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

² Alice Camille, Exploring the Sunday Readings, August 2020.

³ Liz Barrington Forney, Feasting on the Gospels-Matthew, Volume 2, Chapters 14-28 (Louisville, Kentucky: WJK, 2013), 9.

⁴ Ibid. 9.

⁵ Ibid. 11.

⁶ New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

⁷ The U.S. Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#))

⁸ Leslie J. Francis and Peter Atkins, Exploring Matthew's Gospel (Harrisburg PA.: Morehouse, 2001), 113-117.