



LOAVES & FISHES

We Have Here Only Five Loaves and Two Fishes

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Today let us reflect on how Jesus reveals His nature and His name through the New Testament story, Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand. As you enter prayer now, pause to be still; to breathe slowly, to re-center your scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Opening Prayer

God of our hopes and dreams,
we are empty, and long to be filled;
we are hungry, and long to be fed;
we are lost, and long to be found.
Gather us into your love,
and pick up the pieces of our lives,
just as your son, Jesus gathered up the fragments
of the five loaves and two fish
that remained after feeding the five thousand.
Call us anew to eat our fill
and to find our true nourishment in Jesus,
the bread of heaven.
Amen.

Take a walk or move or sit looking out a window in a comfortable spot.

Spend 15-20 minutes just noticing things around you. Sounds, sights, smells. What are you drawn to?

Take 15-20 minutes to sit, pause, and read through Matthew 14:13-21.

Start by acknowledging that God is with you. Here I am, Lord.

First Reading, read slowly, pausing after each phrase or sentence. What word or phrase stood out to you? Sit with this word for a moment, repeating it as you do.

Second Reading, read again slowly, and as you do ask the Lord, “What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?” Perhaps ask yourself where you are in this scene and picture yourself there.

Third Reading, what is my response to God based on what I have read and encountered? Read the passage one more time listening for your own deepest and truest response. “Share with God the feelings the text has stirred, feelings such as love, joy, sorrow, anger, repentance, desire, need, conviction, consecration. We pour out our hearts in complete honesty, especially as the text has probed aspects of our being and doing in the midst of various issues and relationships” (Robert Mulholland, *Invitation to a Journey*, p. 114). Pay attention to any sense that God is inviting you to act or respond in some way to the word you have heard. You might find it helpful to write your prayers or to journal at this point.

Matthew 14:13-21

13 Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself; and when the people heard of this, they followed Him on foot from the cities. 14 When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

15 When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, “This place is desolate and the hour is already late; so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” 16 But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!” 17 They *said to Him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.” 18 And He said, “Bring them here to Me.” 19 Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds, 20 and they all ate and were satisfied. They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets. 21 There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

Closing Prayer | Matthew 14:13

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word of truth and the lessons that it teaches us. Thank You for Jesus and His beautiful example of a life which demonstrated how to live in this frail human body, to Your praise and glory. May I live as He did and be prepared to say in all things, "Your will not mine be done." In Jesus name, Amen.

“When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.”