

**PENTECOST 9**

**THE FEEDING OF THE 5000**

**MATTHEW 14:13-21**

**AUGUST 2, 2020**

There is quite a background to the story of the feeding of the 5000.

Jesus' cousin and counterpart in religion, John the Baptist, had been beheaded by Herod and the news was brought to Jesus. John and Jesus were revered throughout the land. If votes were taken, they would have gotten more votes than Herod. Yet Herod gave them no value, no credence. They were expendable. Let them die. Jesus loved John and now he has been killed by a police force that felt that they could behave without impunity.

Jesus was tired. He took a boat to a lonely place apart. It was time to rest. The disciples sensed this and they tell Jesus to send the crowd away.

So as night was approaching, Jesus was in deep grief and he was exhausted.

However, the crowds, his followers, five thousand of them, are hungry. Jesus says, "give them something to eat." Easy for Jesus to say. What are the disciples to do? They start feeding people with what they have, five loaves and two fish. They fed everybody and had twelve baskets left over.

If that is not enough for you to believe in this guy Jesus, what else do you need? Grief laden, lonely, tired and hungry himself, what does he do? He feeds 5000 people.

Take-aways from this story:

1. Jesus will feed hungry people. However, he will use others to do the feeding. Jesus uses his disciples to feed 5000. Feeding the hungry is also the task of the disciples of Jesus today. There are probably 5000 hungry people within feeding distance of each of us.
2. Jesus has great compassion. He recognizes needs and brings his resources, us, to them. I'm sure the 5000 and the disciples went to sleep that night saying "What a guy! and Who is this guy?" We read this story today and we say, "We know who He is, Jesus, our Lord."

Prayer: Dear Jesus, our Lord, use us to feed hungry people today. Make us be disciples today who are still astounded at your life and work. Amen.