

Seventeenth Sunday Ordinary Time B - 2021
2Kings 4.42-44///Eph.4.1-6///John 6.1-15

→I have always been fascinated by this story...because it contains a certain sense of mystery

→J. fed 5000 people with 5 little loaves of bread and 2 fish

--have you ever wondered HOW in the world that was possible?...

--how could it have happened?... picture it in your mind?

→5000 people sitting around on the ground and a young boy comes forward with his basket....."I don't know if this will do any good, but I have a little bit of food [here]," he says shyly

→I am sure there were giggles in the crowd...looks of disbelief...

→and the apostles were all but ready to dismiss him...and then what happens

///Jesus takes the loaves and distributes them.....

→did each of the 5 loaves begin to multiply?///

→did they become 50 and then 500?....

→did they start dividing, then subdividing, spreading like a single cell that reproduces by division into halves, then quarters, and then 8ths's, becoming more and more abundant

→or did they grow by inflating in size?...did the tiny loaf balloon until became big enough to feed 1000 people?

→seriously....how did 5000 people get fed with 2 fish and 5 little bread cakes?

PAUSE

→some biblical scholars have asked the very same question, and many have come away scratching their head

→...however some have also proposed some intriguing theories to perhaps explain the feeding and how it actually happened

* →one understanding is that each of the people there just took a nibble from the food that was offered...when the basket came by.....they pinched a morsel of bread or a tiny bit of fish, so that when it had gone around there was still some left.

* →a second explanation pictures a small boy coming forward

→offering all that he has and as J. passes that little basket around

→the people **upon seeing** his generosity reach down and pull out what food they had brought with them...but hadn't been willing to share.....

→when the crowd sees the generosity of the boy and Jesus's concern for them, they bring out the lunch they had all along and begin to share it with others....[thus] the miracle is **more about sharing rather than eating**

* →and finally, a third understanding **and the most popular** is that the feeding happened with a miraculous expansion or division of the food

→that somehow the 5 loaves and 2 fish multiplied until there was enough

* →however, what is interesting..... is that our gospel accounts never explain how there was enough food....

.....it just states that J. distributed the bread and the fish

→we really don't know how it happened exactly....and we will probably never ever know.....but [you see].....the real meaning of this story is not **KNOWING** exactly **what** happened or **how** it happened anyway

→THE REAL MEANING BEHIND THIS STORY, IS TO REMIND US IS THAT **GOD ALWAYS DOES A LOT WITH VERY LITTLE.**

→Jesus took 5 loaves and 2 fish...and with that very little bit of food, he fed a lot of people....and throughout our scriptures we find J. always doing a lot with very little

→he took a handful of uneducated, peasants and turned them into dynamic leaders who got the church off the ground

→he took a violent, vengeful rabbi named Saul and made him the first Christian theologian and the writer of most of our scriptures

→he took a woman with a shady reputation and let her be the first to witness the resurrection

→and he took an ordinary sheep herder named Moses and made him a leader of nations

→and throughout history even today, Jesus continues to call ordinary people to do great things

→and [I believe] this is the meaning behind this story

→[and in the same light]...Jesus calls you and me to do ALOT in spreading his message

→.....we don't have to be educated, or wealthy, or powerful or famous to be an important influence for God in someone else's life

→today's gospel is a story we are very familiar with, however the meaning behind the story....is perhaps not so familiar

→because this story is not so much about eating but rather it is about doing

→it is about doing God's work in our lives and in the lives of others....

PAUSE

→over past few weeks we have been hearing about the call to discipleship...about becoming disciples here and now for Christ.....

→and in the coming weeks we will hear about challenges and demands of that call to discipleship

→today we hear about making do with what we have....**about doing a lot with very little...** doing God's work/will in our everyday ordinary lives...

→one of the few blessings of the pandemic was realizing that we could get a lot done with very little....

→and you see.....the actions, thoughts, and words of our daily lives mean something...they truly **can** make a difference

→whether we seek vengeance or forgiveness when we have been hurt...makes a difference

→whether we hear or ignore the cries of poor and disadvantaged... makes a difference

→whether we tolerate immoral decisions at work or at home.....or not makes a difference

→whether we stereotype the person who thinks, or is different than ourselves, or open ourselves to new ideas.....makes a difference

→[and] as we see.....deciding to use 5 loaves/2 fish....made a difference

→the little decisions, the day-to-day responses, the offering of ourselves or holding back...can make a difference

→and God is asking you and me..... to indeed make a difference

→if 5 loaves and 2 fish can make a difference and accomplish great things

→just think what a kind word...a gentle thought...a caring action might do these days

→you and I have been baptized and in doing so we have said yes to this faith, this

life, this church...

[in the end]

→it is up to you and me to start doing a lot....

→it is time for us to start making a difference