

Seventeenth Sunday Ordinary Time B - 2018
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?...I know I have....

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

→think for just a moment....there they are, 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 happened///Jesus takes the loaves and distributes them.....did each of the 5 loaves begin to multiply?///

→did the loaves become 50 and then 500?....do you picture them dividing, 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?

→have you ever given it any serious thought how 5000 people got 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 of 5000 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, people pinched a morsel of bread or a tiny bit of fish, so that when it had gone all around there was still a lot 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 the food that they had brought along, but hadn't been willing to share.....when the crowd sees the generosity of the boy and Jesus' concern for their lives, they bring out the lunch they had all along and begin to offer it to each other....[thus] the miracle here is more about sharing rather than eating

* →and finally, a third understanding and most popular is that the feeding happened with the 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 story never really explains as to how there was enough food....it just states that J. distributed the bread and the fish

→we really don't know how it exactly happened - and we will never ever know.....but 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 A 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 human beings to do great things

→and [I believe] this is one of the meanings behind this story

→Jesus is also calling you and me to do ALOT in spreading his message

→and what this story is saying to us is that.....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 reading is a very famous cute little story...we've heard it many times before
its a story that we are very familiar with, however the challenge [the underlining meaning behind the story....is perhaps not so familiar

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

→it is about doing God's work in our lives and in the lives of others through our daily actions and words and thoughts

PAUSE

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

→and in the next 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 a very little** but the deeper message is about doing God's work/will in our every day ordinary lives

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

→whether we seek vengeance or forgiveness when someone hurts us...makes a difference

→whether we hear the silent cries of our neighbors or friends.....or not 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.....all of that can make a difference in the lives of others

→and God is asking you and I 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 kind action might do these days

you and I have been baptized and in doing so we have said yes to this church, to this parish, and to this community...

[in the end]

--it is time for you and me to start doing a lot

→it is time for each one of us to start making a difference