

**Liturgy of the Word with Children**  
**Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B**  
**28 July 2024**  
**John 6:1-15**

*(This is the last of these resources until Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September. Have a good summer.)*

### **Catechist Background**

Beginning this Sunday and continuing for the next few weeks, we hear instead from John's Gospel. Today's Gospel reading, the feeding of the 5000 (and more), leads into Jesus' description of himself as the *Bread of Life*. (This concept we will hear more about in coming weeks.) The miraculous feeding of a crowd is the only miracle by Jesus that is in all four Gospels. John calls it a 'sign;' it is more significant than just a supernatural event: it is a supernatural event that points to a more important reality. We are told that this miracle took place shortly before the Passover. In the forefront of the minds of the Jews would have been the escape led by Moses from the 10 Plagues and slavery in Egypt. That escape and the feeding of the 5000 prefigures a future Passover, when Jesus celebrated the Last Supper. The feeding of the 5000 and the Last Supper can be broken down into three essential parts: first, Jesus took the food offering; second, he gave thanks ('*eucharisteo*,' in Greek), and finally, the food was distributed among all.

### **Setting the Scene**

For the activity, you will need two stones, one with smooth and one with rough edges.

### **We Say Sorry**

Leader: You invite us to follow you, Lord have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You are present among us in each other, Christ have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You are the giver of all good gifts, Lord have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

### **Gloria**

### **We Pray (1)**

God, you are more wonderful than anything else! Help us to live wisely and to use the gifts you have given us well. Amen.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Gospel:** John 6:1-15

### **Reflecting on the Reading with Children**

- If you had been there with Jesus, how would you have fed everyone?
- Normally, how much food would 5,000 people each get if five loaves of bread and two fish were shared between them?
- What do you think about the boy who gave his lunch to Jesus and his friends?
- How can we be generous in our lives?

### **Response**

- Show the children a smooth stone and a rough stone.

- Explain that the smooth stone probably started out rough, but that it probably spent time in a river and was made smooth by many bumps from other stones over a long time.
- This is similar to how things sometimes work in our world. For an unkind person to change, they need others to show them love and kindness, more than once.
- Sometimes, for a person to be generous, they need to be shown generosity often.
- For the world to be a peaceful place, all of us need to be peace-filled people.
- We have an advantage: we know Jesus and the example he gives us, but many people do not. We need to share Jesus' love with others in our words and actions.
- Encourage the children to think how they can be generous with their love.
- Pass the smooth stone around the children, and suggest that when the stone gets to them, they say aloud how they will be generous with their love this week.
- Conclude by saying that our world is like the rough stone, but if we are open to God and we show God's love, the world will be changed, like the smooth stone.

### We Believe

Relate what you have shared with the children to the Creed by asking these questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father who has made the world full of all that is needed for a happy life?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ who came to share the fullness of his life with us?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who inspires people to let God live through them?

### We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the Gospel reading by saying, 'A young boy offered his food to you, and so we offer our concerns to you in our prayers today...'

Leader: We pray for all people who, like Jesus, tell others about God in their jobs. May they teach what is true. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people all over the world, especially those who do not have enough to eat each day. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for all children, like the boy who shared his lunch with Jesus on the hillside. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for anyone we know who especially needs a prayer at this time. Lord in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, help us know what is the right thing to do, so that we can be the answer to somebody else's prayers. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

*If you have time, remind the children that in today's Gospel, Jesus took food, gave thanks, and shared the food with everyone. When we go back into the church for the rest of Mass, we will experience another time when Jesus did those same things: at the Last Supper.*