



# ADVENTures *a weekly newsletter*

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August 2, 2020 The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship with the Diocese of Albany at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjVmrEwtur7R8akk7Drd9TQ>

## At Advent

Worship is scheduled for Sundays at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. We will be celebrating the Holy Eucharist with a special service.

## Fed Up! Matthew 14:13-21

Matthew 14:19-21 (NCV) Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish and, looking to heaven, He thanked God for the food. Jesus divided the bread and gave it to His followers, who gave it to the people. <sup>20</sup> All the people ate and were satisfied. Then the followers filled twelve baskets with the leftover pieces of food. <sup>21</sup> There were about five thousand men there who ate, not counting women and children.

My first response to this passage: Five thousand men were there; this doesn't take into account women, whether single or married we don't know, let's add another five thousand. Children are also there, we certainly don't know how many. Younger kids would have come with their parents. Let's guess, perhaps, two thousand might have been there. If I am at all in the ballpark, this means there were at least twelve thousand people in the crowd. This amplifies the scope of the miracle tremendously.

At this point in Jesus' ministry, tension was already building for Him and the disciples. John the Baptist who had been imprisoned earlier, had just been beheaded at the whim of the daughter of Herod's wife. There were other issues on the table in addition to this. There was Herod's growing antagonism. Beyond that, Jesus needed to get alone with His disciples to continue teaching them about the Kingdom of God. The disciples just returned from an assignment that Jesus had given them (Mark 6:30-32). They had delivered many people of evil spirits and had seen many other folks healed as the disciples anointed them with oil. This was new territory for them. It was one thing to see miracles at Jesus' hand, now that power was flowing through them.

Now back to the present. Because of John's death, Jesus went in a boat across the sea to be alone. However, he had become quite a celebrity in the region and when the people found where He had gone, a huge swarm of followers made the ten mile trip around the lake and soon thousands of people clamored around Jesus. "He had compassion on them," says Mark, "because they were like sheep without a shepherd." Instead of resting, Jesus healed the sick, and spoke to a crowd large enough to fill a modern arena.

If you had been there, the question of feeding the family would come up. In deed it did. The disciples were appropriately concerned. Even though they had just seen miracles, they had no clue what to do. Send them away so they can go and find their own dinner, suggested one disciple. **Matthew 14:16 (NCV)**

*"But Jesus answered, "They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat." "What? Is He kidding? We're talking eight months' wages! Then Jesus took command in a way none of them had seen before. The little food they had was multiplied in a spectacular way that no one expected.*

Unavoidably, we often read Jesus' life backwards, knowing how it turns out. That day, no one but Jesus had a clue. Murmurs rustled through the group on the packed hillside. Is He the one? Could it be? Jesus said: Bring Me all you have. I'll do the rest! The disciples over-emphasized the problem and under-emphasized the resources available to them because they under-estimated the Lord! Somewhat like the Israelites long ago when confronted with Goliath. Everybody thought, "Look how much bigger he is than us!" David thought, "Look how much smaller he is than God!"

It doesn't matter what you are facing right now as an individual in your life, or what we as American citizens are confronting in our culture, the Lord is big enough as we turn to Him in prayer and expectation. He is bigger and greater than any "cancel culture" movement. Whatever you have, give it Him.

The Lord bless you this week!

Pastor Paul Laursen