



'Light for the Path' a Resource for Families in the Year of Mercy

Session Five for Children: 'Where can we find food to feed so many people?' - the 'gaze' or 'look' of love and mercy.

We look

What do we notice when we 'gaze' or 'look out' at the people around us – people close to us in our families? Our friends? What about looking out at people we don't know?

We listen

Gospel of Luke, Chapter 9:11-17

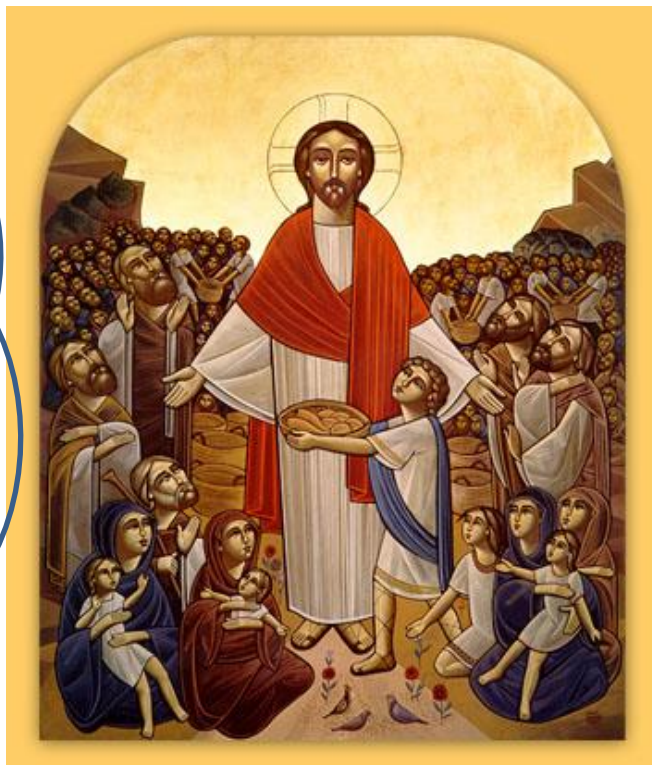
Jesus had taken his apostles away to a place where they could be alone together.

But the people learned where Jesus went and followed him. Jesus welcomed them and talked with them about God's kingdom. He healed those who needed to be healed. Late in the afternoon, the twelve apostles came to Jesus and said, "No-one lives in this place. Send the people away. They need to find food and places to sleep in the towns and countryside around here". But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat". They said, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for all these people?" (There were about 5,000 men there). Jesus said to his followers, "Tell the people to sit in groups of about 50 people." So the followers did this, and all the people sat down. Then Jesus took the five loaves of bread and two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for the food. Then Jesus divided the food and gave it to the followers to give to the people. All the people ate and were satisfied. And there was a lot of food left. Twelve baskets were filled with the pieces of food that were not eaten.

Scripture quoted from International Children's Bible, New Century Version (Anglicised Edition) copyright 1991 by Authentic Media. Used by permission. (This version was translated solely for children from the original Hebrew and Greek texts)

We wonder

- I wonder who you would like to be in this story? And who you would not like to be?
- What might it be like to be one of the hungry people? Or the little boy?
- What about being a friend of Jesus – doing what he has asked us to do, noticing who is around us, and giving them what they need?
- I wonder, can you be hungry for other things – not just food? What about love? or happiness?



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/67/Christ feeding the multitude.jp](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/67/Christ_feeding_the_multitude.jp)

At Home

You might like to talk together about what it means to be 'hungry' in different ways. Can we pay special attention and enjoy the meals we do have, and try not to waste food?

How could we help people who are hungry -

- For food?
- For love and attention?

Find out about how we support homeless people, or food-banks as a parish.



Pope Francis says!

Love is more than a 'feeling' – love means 'to do good'... Love is shown more by doing things than by saying things. ... Giving to others makes us happy. ...Families – don't see yourselves as 'set apart' from others. ...see others as brothers and sisters -that's the secret of a happy family!

(Adapted from The Joy of Love #93, 181, 183)

You may like to draw your favourite part of the story, or your favourite character in it.



Tips for using this 'Year of Mercy' resource with children at home

1. **We gather:** Decide on the best time – before or after school, evening or weekend – for a quiet 10-30 minutes together.
2. **Background:** You will find some notes below.
3. **We look at our experience and our Catholic Tradition:** What does it mean for us to notice people who are hungry? Who are they? What are they 'hungry' for? Following Jesus Christ means that like Him we have to be aware of all those in need and do something about it! (The Gospel, and Catholic Social Teaching)
4. **We listen to God's Word.** Read the story. For the very young, the pictures might help to talk about the story and where we find ourselves in it.
5. **We wonder:** Ask the 'wondering' questions. Have a conversation about these.
6. **Pope Francis says:** Look at the 'Pope Francis' box, and his teaching about looking out and seeing others as brothers and sisters. What catches your attention?
7. **We respond:** Look at the 'At Home' box – and talk about this.
8. **What difference does this make?** Finally, draw the part of the story or character you like best, to remind you of the importance of being there for other people, whatever their needs are.
9. **We pray:** Finish with a simple prayer (see an example below)

Prayer moment

Let's sit quietly for a moment, and remember the way Jesus looked out and saw the needs of the people in front of him. Let's think about all that we have shared together. (Allow a short silence). To finish our time together we pray:

*Thank you Lord Jesus for being with us today. In our time together looking at the bible story of how you fed 5000 people, you have shown us **how to look out, 'gazing' on people, with your eyes, noticing the hunger they have, and finding ways to feed them – with food, and with love.** May our families and homes be places where anyone can come and experience something of God's enormous love and care for them. Help us to see everyone like you do - as our brothers and sisters. We make this prayer, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Background: As Christians in a world where millions of people have no food, and many are dying of starvation, we have a duty to follow **the way set before us by Jesus: to look out with compassion, and respond to the needs of others to the best of our ability.** We mustn't get so caught up in our own 'bubble' worlds that we don't notice or care about anyone else. In our Catholic Christian tradition, there has always been a strong link between celebrating what we have in our lives, and the mystery of what we share in the Mass, which sends us out with the command to LIVE who we say we are, the "Body of Christ", being his eyes and heart, his hands and feet in the world. To share what we have, and feed those who are hungry – whatever their hunger is: physical, emotional, spiritual. The Gospel says share what you have, and be happy!