



a Kendall Hunt Company

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

2 Kings 4:42-44

John 6:1-15

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Loving God,

Open our eyes to see the needs of the poor and hungry.

Help us open our hands and share what we have with those in need.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The main theme for today is Unity of the Church and Ecumenism. To begin invite the young people to reflect on times when they have shared their resources with someone, or when someone has shared something with them. Form a large circle and explain that each person will freeze into a position that represents them sharing something or a position that shows them receiving something. Give the young people a few moments to come up with a statue position. As you go around the circle, have each person freeze into their statue position until the whole group is frozen. Then, invite each person in the circle to explain their position.

Discuss:

- What are some blessings in your life that you are grateful for?
- How do you share what you have been given with others?
- Do you agree with the statement, "It is better to give than to receive?"

Allow time for discussion. Jesus taught us to share what we have with others. As members of one family in Christ, we are called to care for one another and share what we have with those in need.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from the Old Testament, listen to find out about God's abundant love.

Read 2 Kings 4:42-44.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does Elisha tell the servant to do with the small amount of food brought to him?
- How many people need to be fed?



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- What happens when the twenty loaves are set before the people?
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In today's gospel, listen to learn how Jesus feeds a crowd with five loaves of bread and two fish.

Read John 6:1-15.

Allow for silence.

- Why are many people following Jesus?
- What does Jesus do with the five loaves of bread and two fish?
- How are thousands of hungry people fed?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist Background and Preparation** section.

In today's first reading from the Old Testament many hungry people are miraculously fed. A man brings the prophet Elisha twenty barley loaves. Elisha tells his servant to share what he has with the people. But his servant questions Elisha because he does not understand how so many hungry people can be fed with so little. The prophet repeats his request and the servant does what he is asked to do. Miraculously, God multiplies the loaves and all the people are fed, with some food left over. In this passage, the fact that there is food left over symbolizes God's abundant love.

Today's gospel also contains a miracle story about feeding hungry people. A large crowd is following Jesus because they have seen him heal the sick and they want to hear his preaching. Jesus wants to give the people what they need and he knows that they are hungry. Jesus asks his disciples to find food for the people. A boy in the crowd offers his five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus miraculously multiplies the loaves and fish, and the hungry people are given more than enough to eat. Before feeding the people, Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, and shares it. This symbolically shows that the Jewish feast of Passover is replaced with Jesus who is bread and the giver of bread for the life of the world. Jesus feeds the spiritual and physical hunger of the people. The miracle in today's gospel shows Jesus to be Lord and Bread of Life.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How do today's readings show that God gives us what we need?
- How is Jesus bread for the world?
- What is the difference between spiritual and physical hunger?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in**

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Doctrinal Discussion Starter

Unity of the Church and Ecumenism

We believe that the Catholic Church is characterized by unity. All God's people are bound together spiritually as one body in Christ. Ecumenism is the search to bring all Christians together to form the unity that Christ wills for his Body, the Church, on earth. Unity does not mean conformity. The Catholic Church works to understand and respect other cultures, traditions, and expressions of faith.

The division between Christian religions weakens our witness in the world. Therefore, the Second Vatican Council called for a healing of these wounds. The ecumenical movement began among protestant Christians and the Second Vatican Council embraced it as a goal of the Catholic Church.

In the effort to bring about the unity of Christians the Church relies on the source of all unity, the Holy Trinity. The Trinity is comprised of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who are united, three persons in one God. Unity is a gift from God, through the Holy Spirit.

- What is ecumenism?
- How is the Church working toward unity today?
- How can you work toward uniting people with differences?

Sacrament Connection

The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish is connected with our belief in the Eucharist. We believe that Jesus is really present with us and nourishes us in the Eucharist. Jesus is the "bread of life."

The Gospel in Life

How can you share your resources with those in need this week?