

AUGUST 6, 2017
NINTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



God's kingdom is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 14:13-21	Jesus feeds five thousand
Monday	Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15	God feeds the Israelites
Tuesday	2 Kings 4:42-44	Elisha feeds one hundred men
Wednesday	Isaiah 55:1-5	An invitation to abundant life
Thursday	Matthew 15:32-39	Jesus feeds four thousand
Friday	John 21:15-19	Jesus tells Peter to feed his sheep
Saturday	Psalms 145	The Lord is kind and merciful
Sunday	Matthew 14:22-33	Jesus walks on water

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Jesus replied, "They don't have to leave. Why don't you give them something to eat?" **Matthew 14:16 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God, you satisfy our hungry hearts, filling us with your goodness and mercy. Send us out to feed the world with your love. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. Amen. (Psalm 145:15-16)

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love fill you with good things now and forevermore. (Psalm 145:8)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

You Satisfy the Hungry Heart



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you have felt hungry or lacked something important to your life.
- What does it mean to be satisfied and know that you have enough?
- How does it shape your life to know that God is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance for you and all that God has created?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 14:1-21.

In Matthew, the story of the feeding of the five thousand is immediately preceded by King Herod's banquet that included the killing of John the Baptist. Herod's grand birthday party would have included a sumptuous feast and, of course, the dancing of Herodias' daughter, rewarded with John's head on a platter. Jesus' feast was simple, filling, and included healings and full stomachs for all, something that would have been highly unusual for Galilean peasants. Herod's rule displayed brute force mixed with celebration for a few. Jesus' rule displays compassion, generosity, and abundance for all people. Reflect on how the "kingdoms" of this age still remain in stark contrast to the kingdom of God and on what it means to be disciples sent out to feed the masses with the love of God.

Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE

Jesus sent out his disciples to feed the masses, a seemingly impossible task for his disciples. Jesus' directive to his disciples reflects his reign that is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance. Help promote and work on a congregational food drive. Perhaps the food could be brought to the altar at a Holy Communion service, where the Bread of Life is surrounded with the "bread"—the food—that gives life to others.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

There are many kinds of fasts. Fasts can be cleansing and very healthy to the body. In honor of the feeding of the 5,000 men (plus women and children) in Matthew 14, decide on a fast that eats simple and healthy foods without overeating. Choose the food items and amount to be consumed and the length of the fast, then each day of the fast read Matthew 14:13-21. Use the "Mealtime Prayer" from this *Taking Faith Home* with each of your meals.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org