

## **John 6:1-15 (NIV)**

*1 Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), 2 and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. 3 Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. 4 The Jewish Passover Feast was near. 5 When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" 6 He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. 7 Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" 8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, 9 "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. 12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. 14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.*

The Lord will provide! That theme will resound throughout all of our lessons this week. Today, we have the famous miracle of Jesus feeding the 5000. That is really a misnomer since only the men were counted. There were many more than 5000 people there on that day all following Jesus, all now very hungry.

Jesus asks his disciples how they were going to feed the people. He wanted to see where their trust was. He wanted to see how they had grown under his care. The first disciple to answer didn't fare so well. He only saw the large crowd and financial cost in feeding them. Eight months' wages wouldn't be enough to give everyone one bite. It was an impossible task to be sure. But isn't that how it always is when we don't turn to God for help?

The second disciple brought some food to Jesus. Five individual loaves of bread and two fish would have been a meal for a small family. This wasn't going to feed this crowd. Again it was impossible, apart from God. But Jesus was not at all fazed by the seeming impossibility of this task. He took the meager meal and gave thanks to his Father and broke the bread. He told his disciples to pass it out; not only that, but give everyone as much as they wanted. Then he had the gall to tell them to collect the leftovers. Impossible for man, but very possible for God! Twelve basketfuls of leftovers after the multitudes had eaten. God indeed provides for his people when all else seems impossible.

That is the beauty of the Gospel. Nothing else would work! God saved us by sending Jesus when it seemed that salvation was impossible. Jesus strengthens us to this day in a very similar breaking of bread. He gives us his true body and blood in the sacrament. It's impossible to man, but very possible and real for God. God did provide for this crowd; God did provide for the whole world; God will continue to provide for us now and into eternity.