



Free Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
in South Africa

## Sermon- 9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 11B)

*Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, feeds His lambs  
through His Apostles!*



St. John's Lutheran Parish  
Shelly Beach

### • The Word of God for this Sermon is written in Mark 6, 30-44:

- Commentary CPH 6 30 And the apostles *PROCEED TO GATHER TOGETHER* to Jesus, and they announced to him all things, as many as they *had done* and as many as they *had taught*. 31 And he SAYS to them, “Come here, you yourselves, into a deserted place by yourselves and **do rest up** a little.” You know, those coming and going were many, and they did not *have opportunity* even to eat. 32 And they went away in their boat into a deserted place by themselves.
- 33 And they saw them going, and many recognized (it), and they ran together by land there from all the cities, and they preceded them. 34 And upon going out, he saw a great crowd and had deep, heartfelt compassion for them, because they were as sheep that did not have a shepherd, and he began to teach them a lot.
- 35 And after a late hour had already come, his disciples *came to him and proceeded to say*, “The place is **deserted**, and already it is a late hour.
- 36 Dismiss them, in order that, upon going into the surrounding countryside and villages, they may buy for themselves what they *will eat*.”
- 37 But he *in response* said to them, “Give them (something) to eat—**you!**” And they SAY to him, “Shall we *go away and* buy bread for two hundred denarii and *give* them (something) to eat?”
- 38 And he δέ SAYS to them, “How many loaves of bread do you have? Go, see!” And upon knowing (the answer) they SAY, “Five, and two fish.” 39 And he directed them to seat all the people by eating parties on the green grass.
- 40 And they reclined group by group (like garden beds) by hundreds and by fifties.
- 41 And upon taking the five loaves and the two fish, looking up into the sky he said a blessing, and he broke the loaves of bread and *give* (them) to his disciples, in order that they might *set it out before* them, and the two fish he divided for all.
- 42 And all ate and had their fill.
- 43 And they took up broken pieces, the fill of twelve Jewish baskets—and some of the fish.
- 44 And there were—those who had eaten the loaves of bread—five thousand men.
- Let us pray: *Come Holy Spirit, open our ears to hear Your Word and give us insight to understand it. Nurture our faith with Your Word from Heaven! Amen.*
- **Dear beloved of the Father!**
- After the first practical training run and report giving session Jesus withdraws His Apostles to a desolate place to rest a while. The demand for them was huge. Most

hadn't even eaten that day. They went away in the boat for some leisure time. By the way, we see Jesus is not the slavedriver type master. He allows for His Apostles to have some rest. He looks after those He sends out!

- However, the people were tracking them down- without Google Maps- they ran to the place from all the towns and got there, where they were going, ahead of them. So, when they arrived, a crowd was awaiting them.
- What did Jesus do? Jesus had compassion on the crowd. His heart went out to them. The reason being, they were like sheep without a shepherd! This reminds us of Numbers 27,15-18: *“Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, “Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.” So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him.”* Joshua' is the Hebrew for 'Jesus'. And at the Baptism of Jesus, Mark records, that the Spirit of God came into Jesus! Jesus is portrayed as the new Joshua, who is on the verge of leading Israel into the promised land. Jesus is the One who will bring Israel to their true and full Canaan, to their final rest.
- It also reminds us of Ezekiel 34,1-16, where God speaks out against the shepherds of Israel and prophesied that one day He would come Himself to shepherd His people. He would personally seek them out and feed them in rich pasture. This proclaims, Jesus is not only the new Joshua, He is Yahweh Himself, come to bring His endtime reign and rule to His people.
- Indeed Psalm 23 is very much in picture. The Lord is my Shepherd. He makes me recline in green and fresh pastures. He prepares a table before me in abundance, so that I am well saturated. He began to teach them a lot, it says. The kingdom has come. Heaven is near, in Jesus' person. The Israelites are surrounding Him. They hear His voice.
- But, it was getting late in the day. It was a desolated place. No shops. The disciples came up with their own way of solving the problem, how are we going to feed all this people? Send them away and let them buy for themselves food. But, Jesus wanted to give them and us a sign of who He is and how the kingdom of God will work!
- [37] *“Give them something to eat- YOU”*, Jesus said to His Apostles. What do the Apostles do? They get into a flat spin, because they try to solve the meal issue amongst themselves!! They think, 'we have no money, so we cannot feed that many'! But Jesus reminds them and us to look at what they have and to make use

of that to feed all those poor souls who had and have no shepherd!

- Jesus puts His finger on what He knows they have, namely bread! They have five loaves, which Jesus takes, together with two fish and then He commanded them to hand it out. He takes what He knows they have and He provides for a meal which satisfied more than 5000 people- 5000 men were counted, without the women and children.

- Now the bread reminds us of the manna which is a forshadow of Jesus being the Bread from Heaven. God feeds His sheep with Jesus, with His Word taught by Jesus, yet going to be handed out by His Apostles, those whom He sent, after His death and resurrection! Jesus took the five books of Moses, the Torah, which the Apostles knew, according to the letter, and gave to them the original and true meaning, that everything points to Him being the new Joshua and Yahweh Himself.

- The Apostles at that stage didn't understand what Jesus was revealing through this act. They would only later understand and come to write down the true meaning, to reveal to us, the following generations how Jesus was acting and revealing how He was busy fulfilling all the Scriptures.

- Before Jesus let His Apostles handout His bread and fish, He did something else: We hear [39-40] *“And he directed them to seat all the people by eating parties on the green grass. And they reclined group by group (like garden beds) by hundreds and by fifties.”*

- We note, green grass in a desolate place, which signifies “new creation”. Where Jesus sits you down, at His table, the wilderness turns into paradise, the wildernis starts to blossom. Congregations become like flowerbeds in the desert. They have something, which Jesus has given them, which will let them stand out like flowerbeds in the wilderness!

- And this reclining order also signifies that people are gathering to hear the Great Teacher speak to them. They are gathering around the bread. They are gathering to receive the Manna from Heaven, through the called, trained and ordained Apostles of Jesus.

- Then Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, said a blessing, broke the loaves and gave them to His disciples to set before the people. The fish He divided amongst them all.

- And all were satisfied. Not by a mountain of food, simply by Jesus taking what they had and the disciples beginning to hand it out.

- Jesus knows what we have. He has given us His Word, the revelation of God's Grace and of God's Wrath. He says to us today, do not look at what you don't have. See, behold, what you have and hand out what you have received to others.

Please notice, we should not try and make it better by changing the gifts Jesus has given to us. We would just destroy His precious gifts. Paul says, all that counts is that we faithfully administer the mysteries of God.

• So, take the forgiveness which you have received today, hand it out to those around you. Take the teaching that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who wants to feed all people, using His little lambs, that He is inviting all people to His banquet, where He serves us with everything we need in body and spirit.

• That is your first calling in life, personally, and corporately as congregation, that is why we are here. That is why we still exist. Jesus sends us out to spread this message of hope into our communities and to call them and invite them to the real Bread from Heaven, which satisfies sinners. The Law of God and the Gospel work together to lead people to repentance and forgive them. The Law of God pulls out the hidden feelings of guilt from the subconsciousness and the Gospel washes away those sins and resulting guilty consciousness. The feast of the Lord will begin in their life!

• The world around us might have become even more desolate than it was in earlier times. That is how it might feel to us. This is a desolate place and the hour is late. But Jesus says, you give them something to eat. Wherever disciples gather around the Bread of Heaven to receive and eat from Him, to learn from Him, to allow themselves to be taught by Him through the disciples Jesus has sent out, that is the place flowerbeds start to blossom in the wilderness. You might think, we can never be such a place. If we look towards and amongst ourselves for answers we will never have enough money and power of attraction.

• But, the truth is, the Lord is our Shepherd, we shall not want! We will have enough, enough to handout and handout and handout and handout. At the end of time, twelve baskets will be full, the whole of Israel will have been fed, by our Lord, using His disciples, including you and me.

• This is not the time for resignation and sitting quietly in our confessional corner: You give them something to eat!!

• Glory be to the Father, Glory be to the Son and Glory be to the Holy Spirit!  
**Amen.**

• *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. [NKJ 2 Cor3:14.]*