

Lessons and Activities for Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Warm Up Activities:

Option 1: Ask children to fill a sheet of butcher paper or newsprint with pictures of people. Encourage children to include themselves and as many different kinds of people as possible. Use the finished mural to tell today's story.

Option 2: Make or buy a special loaf of bread for your family to share. As you enjoy the bread together, invite your child(ren) to share stories about their favorite family meal traditions. (Many may associate these only with holidays, for example, the Fourth of July, or a birthday.) Discuss: ♦What special bread do we share as Christians? ♦How do we eat this bread?

Interactive Story: Bread for You, Bread for Me!

Once Jesus sat on a hill to teach many, many people. (You may want to point to the mural from warm up exercise if you made it. Encourage child(ren) to name people they know—grandmothers, fathers, children, etc. Use the mural to help prompt their responses.) All of those people were learning from Jesus just like we are today. (Pause for silence.) All of the people are hungry, but there is no food on top of the hill. How will all the people eat? Then, a child brings Jesus a basket with five loaves of bread and two fish. How can that feed all the people? Jesus gives thanks and breaks the bread. (Pass an imaginary basket of bread among the participants.) Bread for you, bread for me, bread for all the people on the hill!

Gospel Reading (Matthew 14:13-21)

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."

"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Praying Together:

Option 1: Display the story mural that the child(ren) made. Invite children to thank God for all the people Jesus loves and feeds.

Option 2: Invite children to recite the Lord's prayer with you. Close by thanking God for sending us bread to eat and for sending us Jesus, the living Bread of Eternal Life.

Craft: Bread-Dough Clay Shapes

Work with your child(ren) to mix 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt and about 1 cup water to make easily-kneaded dough. Children knead the dough for 5-10 minutes until smooth. Each child then takes a lump of dough with which to play and model objects they choose. You might suggest children make play loaves of bread, as told about in today's story.

Game: Go Fish

Give children 24 blank cards. However you want to divide the task, have them draw one fish on each card, making four fish each of these colors: red, green, blue, purple, brown and orange. Now you/they are ready to play a variation of Go Fish. Deal four cards to each player. Place other cards face down in a pile. Before play begins, players put down pairs of fish that match, such as two red fish. One player then asks another for a particular card, for example, a red fish. If the player does not receive the card, he or she draws from the pile. Play continues until all the fish have been matched.

Art: Visual Meditation

Distribute construction paper in light shades and colored chalk/pencils/crayons/markers. Ask each person to draw himself or herself at a meal with Jesus. Encourage participants to brainstorm different picture possibilities: ♦the Eucharist ♦a family meal ♦a meal with the homeless ♦the meal in today's gospel Invite each person to explain their finished pictures.

Music:

Sing, play and/or move to a song reflecting today's theme. Here are several examples:

The Our Father

<https://youtu.be/HnUs5s33iqw>

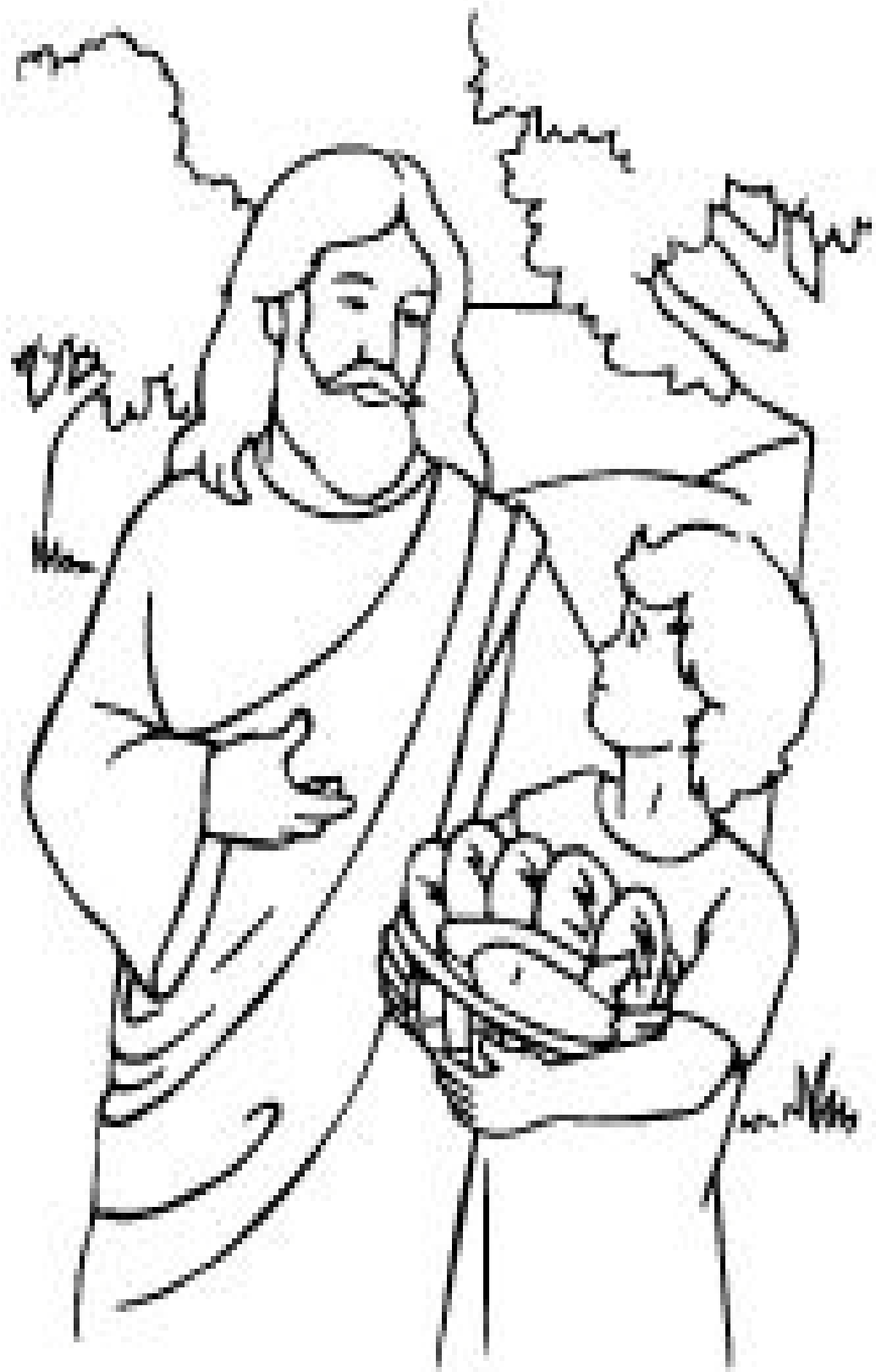
Bread of Life

<https://youtu.be/UQ8jc2psEd4>

Extra Reflection (for Teens and Adults)

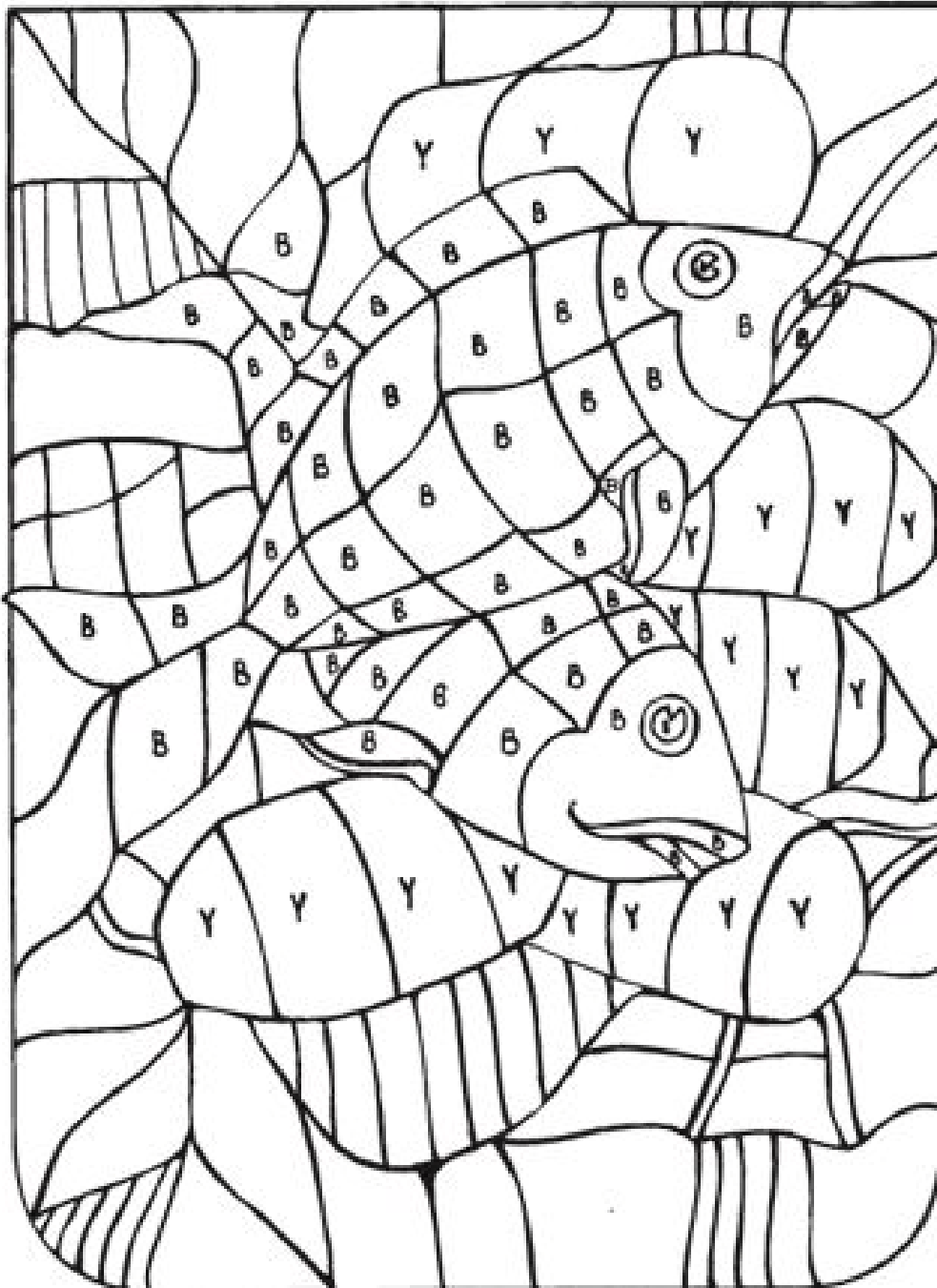
In today's gospel, Jesus feeds thousands of people with five loaves of bread and two small fish. This story is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four gospels, showing its importance to the early Church that produced the New Testament.

Jesus blesses the food by giving thanks. In church we cry out "Amen!" as our liturgy thanks God on behalf of creation, humanity, and the Church. In our lives we struggle to relearn the natural prayer of our childhood, when we woke each morning with wonder and gratitude in our hearts. Time may have dimmed the wonder; sorrow may have stifled the gratitude. Still our vocation as a priestly people is this: to praise God on behalf of all things. This is the truth in which Paul exults when he proclaims that nothing, not our fears, not our sins, not the crushing powers of this world or any other can keep us apart from the love of God shown us in Jesus our Lord. Our lives are broken, but we are loved forever. In spirit, we come to Jesus' side in that green and peaceful pasture. We offer what we have. He gives thanks; he breaks it. He shares it among us. We eat and, oh, we are satisfied.



What's for Lunch?

Read the story of the boy who gave his lunch away that's found in John 6. Then make a picture of that lunch by coloring the Y spaces yellow and the B spaces brown. You may color the leftover spaces with your favorite color.



Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Matthew 14:13-21

Jesus fed over five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish. Some words from this story are hidden in the basket. Try to find all the words listed below.

