



Matthew 14:18-21 (NIV)

“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.”

Our story begins as Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee and goes up onto a mountainside to sit down in a grassy place with his disciples.

A great crowd of people are following him. Jesus has been teaching and healing them for many hours.

Jesus and his disciples see that the crowd is tired and hungry, and they are far away from any place where all of these followers could get food.

Jesus turns to his disciple Philip and asks Philip where they can buy bread to bring back for all of them.

Philip answers that it would take a whole year to make enough money to buy enough bread for everyone to have just one bite. There were five thousand people there! Feeding them all would take a miracle.

The disciple Andrew says that he has found a boy who is willing to share five small barley loaves and two small fish. Andrew knows that will not be enough to feed even a few of the people. But Jesus accepts the boy’s offering.

Jesus tells the disciples to have the people all sit down on the grass in groups of about fifty people. Even one group is a lot of people and there are one hundred groups!

Jesus takes the boy’s five loaves of bread, gives thanks for them, and starts to pass pieces out to the huge crowd of people. Jesus and his disciples keep passing out bread until everyone has enough. They do the same with the fish.

Everyone eats until they are full.

Then Jesus tells his disciples to take baskets and gather up the leftovers so they won’t be wasted. When the disciples come back, they have filled twelve baskets with the leftovers from the five loaves and two fishes that have already fed five thousand hungry people.

Those who see and hear of this miracle recognize the power of Jesus to transform a small offering into food for a multitude. Jesus feeds the hungry with bread and fishes and also with love and the Holy Spirit.

