

Gospel: A reading from the Gospel of John 6: 1-21

Some time later, Jesus crossed over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee—that is, Lake Tiberius—and a huge crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he gave by healing sick people. Jesus climbed the hillside and sat down there with the disciples. It was shortly before the Jewish feast of Passover.

Looking up, Jesus saw the crowd approaching and said to Philip, “Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?” Jesus knew very well what he was going to do, but asked this to test Philip’s response.

Philip answered, “Not even with two hundred days’ wages could we buy loaves enough to give each of them a mouthful!”

One of the disciples, Simon Peter’s brother Andrew, said, “There’s a small boy here with five barley loaves and two dried fish. But what good is that for so many people?”

Jesus said to them, “Make the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass there, and as many as five thousand families sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting there; he did the same with the fish, giving out as much as they could eat.

When the people had eaten their fill, Jesus said to the disciples, “Gather up the leftover pieces so that nothing gets wasted.” So they picked them up and filled twelve baskets with the scraps left over from the five barley loaves.

The people, seeing this sign that Jesus had performed, said, "Surely this is the Prophet who was to come into the world." Seeing that they were about to come and carry him off to crown him as ruler, Jesus escaped into the hills alone.

As evening approached, the disciples went down to the lake. They got into their boat, intending to cross to Capernaum, which was on the other side of the lake. By this time it was dark, and Jesus had still not joined them; moreover, a stiff wind was blowing and the sea was becoming rough.

When they had rowed three or four miles, they caught sight of Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water. They were frightened, but he told them, "It's me. Don't be afraid." They were about to take him into the boat, but suddenly the boat was ashore at their destination.

For sacred words of challenge and encouragement

thanks be to God.

A Contemporary Reading: Logos by Mary Oliver

Why worry about the loaves and fishes?

If you say the right words, the wine expands.

If you say them with love

and the felt ferocity of that love

and the felt necessity of that love,

the fish explode into many.

Imagine him, speaking,

and don't worry about what is reality,

or what is plain, or what is mysterious.

If you were there, it was all those things.

If you can imagine it, it is all those things.

Eat, drink, be happy.

Accept the miracle.

Accept, too, each spoken word

spoken with love.

For love and truth in contemporary expression

thanks be to God.