

**Preparation:** Take 30 seconds of silence, to rest in God's presence.

**Mark 6:30-44:** Scarcity or Abundance?

<sup>30</sup> The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; <sup>36</sup> send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat." <sup>37</sup> But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?" <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." When they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." <sup>39</sup> Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. <sup>41</sup> Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And all ate and were filled; <sup>43</sup> and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup> Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

This is the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

Jesus, Son of God,  
you are the multiplier of loafs and fishes.  
When by all appearances, there was not enough,  
you supplied abundantly.  
Today, our resources are so scarce:  
Our budgets are tight, our time is limited, our capacity is spent, our patience is thin.  
But the needs are so many:  
COVID-precautions, Core discussions, Workday tasks, program revisions,  
technology updates, student retention, and the challenges of teaching in-person and online.  
We are spent, we are tired, we are frustrated.  
There is not enough and we've had enough.  
Still, we hear your voice calling,  
"Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while."  
Such an invitation seems laughable,  
but for the fact that you also asked, "How many loaves have you?"  
You know our limitations, you know our weakness  
And promise to take our scarcity and turn it into an abundance:  
Tired teaching prompting deep learning,  
Inadequate communication eliciting shared understanding,  
Clumsy administration resulting in effective programming,  
Limited face time occasioning student well-being.  
Grant us faith, therefore, to rest in you,  
To trust in your abundance as we offer what little we have.  
In your compassionate name we pray.

**Amen.**