



FEEDING 5,000

**ART
WORKSHOP**



OVERVIEW



SCRIPTURE

John 6:1-14



CONNECTION

Feeding 5,000 takes on a global view in the guiding principle of Passing on the Gift®. It is the first of Heifer's 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development and highlights the importance of sharing our gifts with others.

Heifer works with communities to provide the means for people to support themselves. A family is expected to pass on its gift by sharing one or more of its animal's offspring—along with knowledge, resources and skills—with a neighbor in hopes of improving the health of the entire community. Families pass on the gift to another, then to another, until every family in the community is self-reliant. Then, the community passes on the gift to other communities and reaches a global impact of ending hunger and poverty.



MAIN IDEAS

- Jesus performed a miracle when he fed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish
- Heifer helps to feed thousands throughout the world by supplying them with the means to produce their own food
- Passing on the Gift occurs when one family passes on one or more of its animal's offspring to another family



HIGHLIGHTS

- Conduct a Bible study on Jesus' feeding the 5,000
- Look at the early Christian art found in the catacombs that uses the fish symbol
- Describe the fish symbol used by the church
- Create a fish print
- Discuss how Heifer feeds thousands
- Think about raising money to give the gift of fish through Heifer



SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- Paint
- Fish stencils or foam fish
- Fabric banner (e.g. a piece of muslin long enough to hang across a room)
- Copies of the script on Page 6



ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a work area so students can paint the fabric or paper
- Think about how the banners will be displayed. Will they stay in the classroom? Will they be used as an exhibit for a fundraiser for Heifer? Will they be used in a fish booth for a Living Gift Market?

LESSON

INTRODUCTION

If you read the headline, “Man Feeds 5,000 With 5 Loaves, 2 Fish,” would you believe it? It seems like the kind of headline that people see on fake news sites and stories. It seems impossible and unexplainable.

BIBLE STUDY

For Jesus, his disciples and the 5,000 who were fed, there was only one explanation: it was a miracle. Read what the Bible says about this story.

- Distribute the Bibles and explain how the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 is woven throughout the first four books of the New Testament, also known as the Gospels
- Read John 6:1-14
- Enact the script on Page 6; assign reading roles for the narrator, persons 1-4, Jesus, Philip, Andrew and the crowd

NOTE:

This reading can be simple, using only readers, or elaborate by adding costumes and props.

DISCUSSION

- What do you think is a miracle?
- Can this be explained?

People call this a miracle. A miracle is something that can't be explained. That's what Jesus did when he fed the 5,000. He showed God's presence by feeding the people's physical hunger. He spent the rest of his ministry showing people how he could fill their spiritual hunger. Jesus' ministry gave us a vision of the Kingdom of God, including that everyone should be fed. To make that a reality, we all are called to participate, to share our abundance and to pass on our gifts and talents to those in need.

NOTE:

Older children can look up the accounts of this miracle in the other Gospels and compare them. (Reference Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17.)

THE FISH SYMBOL AND THE CHURCH

Find and show pictures of the catacombs art to the class and share information about early Christian art and symbolism. Early Christians decorated their burial tombs under the city of Rome with imagery that reminded them of God's saving grace. The fish is a common symbol of the church, as it is a reoccurring theme throughout Christianity. It reminds us that Jesus fed 5,000 people with just two fish and five loaves of bread. The first four people that Jesus called to be disciples were fishermen. Jesus met Peter on the beach after the resurrection while cooking fish.

The Ichthus is a symbol in the shape of a fish. In Greek, Ichthus means "fish."



The first letters of the following words make the acronym:

- I=Jesus (Iesus)
- Ch=Christ (Christos)
- Th=Theou (God's)
- U=Uios (Son)
- S=Soter (Savior)

GREEK TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION				
I	X	Θ	Υ	Σ
I	CH	TH	U	S

The acronym IChThUS means "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior."

An old saying goes "if you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day; but if you teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime." While serving milk to refugees in the Spanish Civil War, the founder of Heifer, Dan West, realized that it wasn't enough to simply provide the refugees a cup of milk each day. They needed the means to supply their own milk. When he returned to his farm in Indiana, he decided to send young cows, or heifers, back to Spain. This idea blossomed into Heifer International.

CONNECTION TO HEIFER

Since 1944, Heifer has set 155 million men, women and children on a path toward self-reliance. Heifer provides families with the gift of training and animals, which provides both food and income. In turn, the family passes on the offspring to another family in need. Over time, Passing on the Gift can lift a whole community out of poverty.

One of the gifts that Heifer provides to help families become self-reliant is schools of fish fingerlings. Fish help families increase daily nutrition with lean, healthy protein. And families can Pass on the Gift of fish in a relatively quick time frame, allowing others to benefit.

FISH BANNER

Create a fish banner to help students remember how we are all called to live out our faith by helping others to feed themselves. Let the participants paint their fish onto the fabric and then wash up. Display the fish banner in the room or in an area where you are holding a fundraiser for Heifer.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Discuss how your group can raise money to get someone started on a fish farm while the class makes their fish banner.

- A. Are you going to raise \$300 for one full gift of three schools of fish fingerlings? Or \$30 for an individual share? The children may set up a table after worship to sell paper fish for \$1 each to be taped on the display.
- B. Hold a fish fry and donate the proceeds to Heifer.
- C. Is this workshop a part of a Fill the Ark or Living Gift Market where fish are part of the whole package? Create a booth for the sale of fish.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Lord, we ask that you open our hearts to sharing our gifts and talents with others in need. Just as Jesus taught us, we become part of the miracle when we choose to act on our faith. Amen.

SCRIPT FOR THE BIBLE STUDY

Every time the crowd says "I'm hungry," the crowd should rub their tummies.

Narrator: After this, Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw that he was caring for the sick.

Person #1: Did you hear that Jesus healed that lame man who has been sitting by the Sheep Gate for 38 years? Jesus said, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." And the man did!

Crowd: I'm getting hungry.

Narrator: Jesus went up the mountain and sat down with his disciples.

Crowd: I'm hungry.

Narrator: Now the Passover, a festival of the Jews, was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip...

Jesus: Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?

Narrator: He said this to test him, for he knew what he was going to do.

Crowd: I'm hungry.

Philip: Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each person to eat a little.

Narrator: One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him...

Andrew: There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?

Crowd: I'm hungry.

Jesus: Make the people sit down.

Crowd: I'm hungry.

Narrator: Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about 5,000 in all. Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

Crowd: Wow! I'm full. I can't eat another thing.

Narrator: When everyone was satisfied, the disciples gathered the leftovers. It was enough to fill 12 baskets.

Person #2: How did he do that? There must be 5,000 of us here. We all ate until we were full.

Person #3: Who is this man?

Person #4: This is indeed the Messiah who is to come into the world.