

FEEDING OF THE 5,000 & TRANSFIGURATION

THE LIFE OF CHRIST WITH SAINT LUKE



Photo: church-viktor.org



Bethsaida:

Located on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, Luke tells us the Feeding of the 5,000 occurred near this city.



Transfigured:

means to change in outward appearance.

OUR CONTINUED JOURNEY WITH LUKE

Luke 9:1-9

Up Then provide an age appropriate explanation of the icon or map and also provide guided questions for teachers / parents to ask the children.

1

GOALS

How does the Feeding of the 5,000 apply to us today? Continued study of the major feasts.

2

AT CHURCH

Service of Artoklasia
Liturgy on the feast day of the Transfiguration

3

AT HOME

We pray before we eat.
We have icons of the feast days in our homes.

FEEDING THE 5,000

Luke 9:10-17

After Jesus' disciples returned and they shared everything that had happened, Jesus took them away from the crowds that constantly followed them to a deserted place near the city of Bethsaida. *Find on classroom map. Label location "Feeding of the 5,000 near here" with a post-it note.*

But...the crowds of people quickly figured out where Jesus had gone and thousands appeared. Just as before, Christ heals many and then teaches them. However, this time is a little different. They are out in the middle of nowhere. There aren't restaurants or hotels like we have today, so the disciples ask Jesus to tell the people to go back to the nearby cities so they can find food - but instead Jesus tells the disciples they need to feed them. Undoubtedly, they probably look at Jesus like this is an impossible task and informed Him that they only have 5 loaves of bread and two fish. There are 5,000 men here plus their wives and children! There's no way they can feed all these people with the little bit of food they have with them!

Jesus instructs the disciples to gather the people in groups of 50. They do so and then Jesus blessed



Mosaic floor in the Church of the Multiplication in Tabgha, Israel

the 5 loaves and two fish. Afterwards, the disciples began to pass out what had been given to them by Jesus. Not only were they able to feed over 5,000 people, but they had 12 baskets of leftovers after everyone had eaten until they were full!

Place post-it note on timeline: Christ feeds more than 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

HOW DOES THIS MIRACLE APPLY TO OUR LIVES TODAY?

1. Just as Christ demonstrated **praying before everyone ate**, we also pray before each of our meals too. *What prayer does your family say together before eating?*

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Gospel of Luke: Good News for the Poor by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pages 182-208

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Luke by Blessed Theophylact, pages 94-107



2. We have a service called artoklasia, which is oftentimes celebrated in our parish during a vigil the night before a feast day. **Artoklasia means “breaking of bread” and is a short service of thanksgiving for the blessings in our lives and in commemoration of the miracle of Christ feeding five thousand with five loaves of bread.** *In our homes, we bake bread called artos to bring to the church for the artoklasia service. How many of you have every made this bread or have seen someone in your family make it? Today, we have some artos for everyone to taste.*

JESUS TRANSFIGURED ON THE MOUNT

Luke 9:28-36

What do you remember about the feast of the Transfiguration?

If needed, prompts:

- *When do we celebrate this feast day? (Aug. 6th)*
- *What happened to Christ? Who was with Him?*
- *Or - Show icon and ask students to tell you what they remember. Who is in the icon? Where are they? What is happening?*

At the top center of the icon, we see Christ in white garments and a circular mandorla around Him. The mandorla represents the divine glory and light as He brilliantly and blindingly glistened before the three disciples - Peter, John, and James - depicted at the bottom of the icon.

As we look at the icon, on the left side we see Elijah and on the right side we see Moses. When the disciples wake up, Moses and Elijah are talking to Christ about His exit from this world through His Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension.

In the middle of the icon (left side), we see Christ

ascending the mountain (Mt. Tabor) with Peter, John, and James. On the middle right side, we see Christ descending the mountain with the inner circle of disciples.

Mt. Tabor is located southwest of the Sea of Galilee. Find Mt. Tabor on your classroom map.



ACTIVITY

1. Pass out the following icons (mixed up) from previous lessons and ask the students to place them in the correct order of when we celebrate them in our ecclesiastical calendar.
2. Using a post-it note, write the month we celebrate these feast days and place it under the icon.

Nativity of Christ (*December 25th*); Theophany (*January 6th*); Presentation of Christ in the Temple (*Feb. 2nd*); Annunciation (*March 25*); Transfiguration (*August 6th*)

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AT HOME

FOR PARENTS

Almost at the end of the liturgical year, in August, we have the feast of Christ's Transfiguration. This is another of the fundamental commemorations. Unfortunately, since it usually falls on a weekday, not many people celebrate it. Yet for the comprehension of the Orthodox faith it has a unique importance. Christ took His disciples and went up on the mount, and there His face appeared shining. His vestments became white as snow, and one of the disciples said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." This was the fulfillment of all human desires, the moment of supreme happiness. For nothing in this world can satisfy us save God, His glory, His light, His truth, His kingdom. Again, Christianity is joy; such is the meaning of Transfiguration. He has given us the power of going with Him to Mount Tabor, and of tasting there of that which he has prepared for us.

What is the Church? The Church is the reflection in this world of the light seen by the disciples of Mount

*Tabor. Ask our old people. They would never understand what it means that they **must** go to church, for to go to church is joy for them, and when they cannot go to church, they are unhappy. While we ask "How much?" And "How long?" They would give everything they have for the opportunity to be in church. The church for them is not a place where we fulfill our religious obligations, but the place where we find our real **home**, where joy and light are given to us. Thus in the liturgy of the year, all the dimensions of Christianity - the individual, social, and the cosmical - are revealed and given to us. Our Christian life is revealed as climbing up that mountain, following Christ. Sometimes it is very hot; sometimes very cold. Sometimes we become tired of the effort, and put it aside, and seem to forget all about it. Yet if there is meaning in Christian life, it lies precisely in always following Christ to Mount Tabor, so that at the end we can say, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here.'*

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann
Liturgy and Life: Christian Development Through Liturgical Experience

HOME ACTIVITY #13

YouTube: Mount Tavor (Tabor) Israel Video Tour https://youtu.be/AD0CMxT_TJk

YouTube: Jezreel Valley, Mount Tabor, Israel (drone footage) <https://youtu.be/lj-XmuOZu3U>

YouTube: Transfiguration Monastery, Mount Tabor https://youtu.be/3_acLyRPJ78



