

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, May 6th 2011

It is unusual for a miracle event to appear in all four gospels, but this one does, such is its profound significance, yet the telling of the feeding of the five thousand is simple and straightforward. Imagine the scene. Where would you place yourself in that great crowd? ...At the back as an onlooker? ... Close to Jesus so as to hear his every word?... Right in the middle, so as to soak up the atmosphere? How do you feel when Jesus tells Philip to go and buy food, and when the little boy offers his rough barley loaves and his pickled sardines? Perhaps you are that boy, willing to share all you have, meagre though it is? And what happens to you as you realise that Jesus is blessing and sharing the bread and fish? Does Jesus ask you to help with the distribution? Or are you waiting eagerly for your share? Or perhaps worrying that there might be none left for you? Do you help with the picking up of all those scraps, usually left for the people who have served the meal, but this time indicating that everyone in the vast crowd has had their fill? What happens to the crowd when all the feeding and the sharing is over? More importantly, how do you feel and what happens to you?

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