

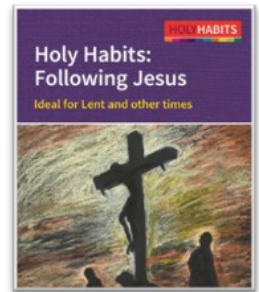
HOLY HABITS: FOLLOWING JESUS

Week 3: 4th March - 'JESUS SHARING BREAD'

Focus habits:

'Breaking Bread', 'Sharing Resources' and 'Eating Together'

Luke 9:12-17



Before we start... FIND SOME BREAD – look at it while you sing, listen to, or read the opening song...

Opening Song: 'Let us break bread together' <https://youtu.be/GsSSPT0HdKc>

(Reflect on the words if you do not have access to the music)

Let us break bread together on our knees; let us break bread together on our knees:
When I fall on my knees with my face to the risen sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees; let us praise God together on our knees:
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the risen sun, O Lord have mercy on me.

(WHEN YOU HAVE SUNG THE SONG...EAT A PIECE OF YOUR BREAD)

Prayer: Lord, as we break bread and praise you in our homes, nourish our souls that we might live as broken, blessed, thankful and sharing people. Amen.

Bible Reading: Luke 9:12-17 (NRSV) (As you listen/read - what words or phrases do you notice? Note these and we will return to them later.)

¹²The day was drawing to a close, and the twelve came to him (Jesus) and said, 'Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a deserted place.' ¹³But he said to them, 'You give them something to eat.' They said, 'We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.' ¹⁴For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, 'Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.' ¹⁵They did so and made them all sit down. ¹⁶And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Reflect: Share what phrases/words you noticed when the text was read... (we will return to these later).



This is Eularia Clarke's painting 'The Five Thousand' from the Methodist Modern Art Collection. What does it say to you about the holy habits of breaking bread, sharing resources and eating together?

In the gospels there are several stories of Jesus breaking bread. We often think of 'The Last Supper', but today we look at Jesus breaking bread in a very different setting - a story so rich in symbolism that we might overlook the basics: people are hungry and Jesus ensures they are fed. In Luke's version, they are fed through a process of blessing and sharing. In John's account, the generous giving of a young boy is an important part of the story (John 6:9). Exactly how Jesus made sure there was enough to eat is debated often. Were the bread and fish multiplied in his hands or did he encourage a release from selfishness and a generous sharing of the resources that the people had? Either interpretation could be deemed a miracle.

Questions for discussion:

1. Think about the resources you have been blessed with. Which of these might you be being called to share with others?
2. What does the story say about how your practices of breaking bread and eating together could be renewed or developed?
3. In what ways other than Holy Communion might you break bread?
4. Who are the physically hungry in your community? How might you share the resources you have (time, goods, money, etc.) to help them eat well?
5. Returning to the words you noted from the Bible reading, which other things might you need to pay attention to?

Respond: 'Longing for light (Christ, be our light)' by Bernadette Farrell, noting verse 3 in particular.

<https://youtu.be/kt3Qc04uIOM>

Longing for light, we wait in darkness; Longing for truth, we turn to You.
Make us Your own, Your holy people; Light for the world to see.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in Your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled; Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us. Make us your living voice. *Christ be our light...*

Longing for food, many are hungry; Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us Your bread, broken for others Shared until all are fed. *Christ be our light...*

Longing for shelter, many are homeless; Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us Your building, sheltering others; Walls made of living stone. *Christ be our light...*

Many the gift, many the people; Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another; Making Your kingdom come. *Christ be our light...*

EAT ANOTHER PIECE OF BREAD... Prayer: Lord, as we have eaten together and thought about the part we play in the communities you have placed us in, show us how we can live as broken, blessed, thankful and sharing people. Amen.

'Take-home' idea: Try giving thanks for and breaking a piece of bread before you eat your main meal every day for the next week. As you do this, hold before God in prayer those in need who you are particularly conscious of. Think about how doing this affects you – (If you are joining the Zoom group there will be a chance to share about this in the group next week).