

Sermon- Our Savior's Lutheran Church - May 5th, 2019

Lutheran World Relief Sunday

Text- John 21:1-17

Feed Who?

Grace and Peace to you and from our Lord Jesus Christ. We have in front of us a Wisconsin text. It's a Wisconsin text because it refers to a fish fry involving Jesus and a few of his disciples. Maybe this is where we got the tradition of our Friday night fish fries.

Let's look at the Sitz in Leban - the situation in time. Here is how the Gospel came about. The boys, some of the disciples, are back home in Galilee, by the Sea of Tiberias, which, since you are biblical scholars is really the Sea of Galilee. Not really a sea as we know it, more like a glorified lake. So, there the disciples are, biding their time waiting for further instructions from their Risen Lord about what they should be doing. Remember last week they got their first glimpse of their job description - they should be about forgiving people - all people. So, in the meantime, they do what they do best, they engage in their profession, catching fish. "I'm going fishing" Peter declares. For him this does not mean sitting in a boat with a rod and reel for a couple of hours drinking a few cold ones. No, they haul out the net, get into a big boat, and they fish at night when they know the fish are abundant.

But, as the text says, they toiled all night and came up with nada. They are tired, exhausted perhaps, and undoubtedly frustrated. Now, it is dawn and some guy on shore calls out to them and asks "children, do you have any fish?" Who is that guy, they probably wondered? They answer 'nope'. The guy says that they should be the nets on the starboard side. The guy wanted them to try something different. That's the key point - try something different. Maybe it was the guy's voice, or the disciples looking at each other and saying what can it hurt, but they give it a shot. And lol and behold, the nets are full of a ton of fish. They bring the fish to shore, and they have the first recorded fish fry in our Gospels. And of course, they recognize that the guy is Jesus himself.

And then what follows is a dialogue between Jesus and Peter about the next part of their job description. Peter - "Do you love me?" He asks it three times. Each time Peter says of course I do!

Jesus then says Feed my Lambs- Feed my sheep- Feed my lambs. Try something different, Peter. Be about feeding the least of these my brothers and sisters. Care for them, feed them, reach out to them. Be about the Lord's work.

Well, what's it all about for you and me. Who are the lambs? Who should we be feeding? What should we do different? Glad you asked!

Who are the Lambs? Many of them are simply out there. Watching us, trying to figure out this church thing. Seeing our new sign, but still unsure what it means for them. Feed them with your story, tell them the great story about Our Savior's and that they can find Jesus in this place. Do something different – tell the story and feed them.

Who are the Lambs? Some of them used to be members of Our Savior's but have drifted away or were pushed away, and never found their way back home. Do something different. Feed them. Welcome them back home without any preconditions. Tell them your story.

Who are the Lambs? They are the people right next to you in the pews. Lambs and Sheep who need to be loved and accepted and encouraged in their walk of faith. Feed them with your forgiveness and caring.

Who are the Sheep and Lambs? You might have noticed that this is Lutheran World Relief Sunday. The lambs and the sheep are those people we do not see. In distant lands, but with unbelievable needs. Soon, we will take up a noisy coin offering. Actually, this week and next week so that we can feed the lambs. Let's do something different. Make it a silent paper offering. If you have never given to LWR, do something different. Give so that the lambs are fed.

Do you love me Bob? Yes Lord I love you!

Then feed my Lambs

Do you love me Alice? Yes Lord you know I do!

Then feed my sheep.

Do you love me Sue? Yes Lord you know I do!

Then feed my lambs.

Can we do it? Of course we can. Jesus is helping us just like he helped the first disciples.

Amen. Let it be so.