

## “You give them something to eat.” (Lk 9:13)

Jesus was speaking to a large crowd about the kingdom of God. They were in an isolated place near Bethsaida in Galilee. He had gone there with His disciples so they could rest after their long missionary journey through the region. They had been preaching repentance, “bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.” Tired but with full hearts, they eagerly told Jesus about all they had done.

However, the people discovered where Jesus had gone and followed Him. He welcomed them all, listening, speaking, and healing those in need. The crowd grew larger, and as the day went on, people became hungry. The apostles grew concerned and proposed a logical, practical solution: “Send them away so that they can go to the nearby villages to find lodging and food.” After all, Jesus had already done so much for them. But His response was unexpected: “You give them something to eat.”

The apostles were stunned. How could they possibly do that? They only had five loaves of bread and two fish—nowhere near enough for several thousand people. It would be impossible to find enough food in Bethsaida, and they didn’t have the money to buy any.

Jesus wanted to help them understand that He is deeply moved by the people’s needs. He started with what was available and valued even the smallest offering. Though their resources seemed inadequate, He called them to be instruments of God’s mercy and care for His children. The Father would intervene, but He needed their contribution. A miracle first requires our faith and initiative—then God makes it happen.

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When the apostles objected, Jesus didn’t dismiss their concerns or solve the problem for them. Instead, He took the lead but invited them to do their part, however small. The miracle required their participation—it required them to offer what little they had, trusting that it would be enough. Their act of faith, sacrifice, and trust in Jesus became the foundation for God’s abundance.

Jesus, the great teacher, uses real-life situations to show us how to care for one another. When faced with the needs of others, we cannot make excuses like, “That’s not my job,” “There’s nothing I can do,” or “They need to fend for themselves, just like the rest of us.” By offering our small part to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and care for the poor—while trusting that God will do the rest—we can be assured that, just like in the story of Jesus feeding the crowd, miracles will take place today.

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Focolare community in Barcelona formed a group through social networks to share resources and support those in need. Food, medicine, furniture, and household appliances were exchanged and provided to those who lacked them. The group, called “*Fent Família*” (“Being a Family”), continues today, ensuring that, just like in the early Christian communities, no one among them is left in need. As they say, “*Alone we can do little, but together we can do a lot.*”

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Each month the Focolare chooses a Scripture passage as a guide and inspiration for daily living. The commentary on it was originally written by founder, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008). Today this Word of Life, written by an international commission and translated into 96 different languages, reaches several million people worldwide. For audio and videos resources about the WoL, visit [focolaremedia.com](https://focolaremedia.com)

