

SS25 Group B | Jesus Feeds Five Thousand
By Kathryn Higgins

Written for Star Search Group B based on Mark 6 30-44 NLT. Written for a minimum of four actors (doubling the NARRATOR as a disciple), this interactive piece submerges the actors into the audience, breaking the fourth wall while animating a well-known story of one of Jesus' miracles. To accommodate for more actors lines may be share/divided but not changed. Actors are encouraged to mime the food instead of physical props.

ALL Jesus Feeds Five Thousand.

NARRATOR The apostles-

DISCIPLES -exhausted – (*slump, exhale etc.*)

NARRATOR -returned to Jesus from their ministry tour. They told him all they had done and taught.

Disciples speak simultaneously about the amazing things they have seen/done ex. "Rabbi, there were so many people...I went for three days I found bread... Lazarus got back into competitive speed walking...I haven't slept in a week..." etc.

JESUS (*Lifts up arms.*) Friends. (*A hush falls on the group.*) You're tired. Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.

NARRATOR He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat.

DESCIPLES grumble and rub bellies.

ONE But there's people everywhere.

TWO We're swarmed wherever we go.

THREE I haven't eaten since breakfast... yesterday!

ONE Oh look! (*Pointing to the distance. All disciples look.*) A boat!

TWO Let's ask if we can use it to get away for a bit. We could go fishing!

ALL EXCPT JESUS Yes! Good idea! I love fish. That would hit the spot. *Etc.*

NARRATOR So, they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone. At least, they tried to-

ONE We've been spotted!

ALL EXCPT JESUS Oh no! Here they come! This crowd is huge! *Etc.*

NARRATOR People recognized them and saw them trying to leave. There were people from many far away towns and villages. Some had walked miles to see Jesus.

ONE They're running ahead along the shore to get ahead of us!

TWO We were so close.

THREE Jesus, can't you tell them we need to rest. We're hungry.

NARRATOR But Jesus saw the huge crowd. He stepped away from the boat and had compassion on them.

JESUS They are like sheep without a shepherd.
(Jesus mimes preaching to the crowd – use the real-life crowd in front of you for this.)

NARRATOR So he began teaching them.
(Disciples slump/sit down in exhaustion. They grumble.)

TWO This is gonna be a long one.

THREE Doesn't this guy get hungry?

ONE/TWO *(Quoting Jesus)* 'Man does not live by bread alone.'
(They give each other a knowing smile. They assume restful positions.)

NARRATOR Hours passed. *(Disciples change position. They look uncomfortable/tired.)*

ONE You ask him.

TWO No, you do it.

THREE We'll do it together.

DISCIPLES walk to JESUS.

NARRATOR Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said,

THREE Teacher, this is a remote place, and it's already getting late.

ONE Everyone is hungry.

TWO Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat.

NARRATOR But Jesus said –

JESUS You feed them.

Beat.

DISCIPLES Huh?

ONE With what?

THREE We'd have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!

JESUS How much bread do you have?

DISCIPLES None.

TWO We haven't eaten all day.

THREE Not since breakfast... yesterday.

JESUS Go and find out. (*Gesturing to the crowd.*)

Disciples begrudgingly walk down stage, or even off stage, asking the actual crowd if they have any food.

NARRATOR So the disciples went into the crowd and asked around if anyone had anything to eat.

ONE (*To the crowd.*) Anything at all?

TWO (*To the crowd.*) Bread?

THREE (*To the crowd.*) Anyone?

NARRATOR But, most of the people had been walking for days and had eaten all their supplies.

DISCIPLES return to stage, addressing JESUS-

THREE No bueno, Jesus.

ONE There must be over 5000 families here, and they've already eaten everything they brought with them.

TWO We found only five loaves of bread –
(placing imaginary bread in Jesus' hands)

THREE -and one fish.
(placing imaginary fish in Jesus' hands)

ONE Make that, two fish.
(placing imaginary fish in Jesus' hands)

JESUS *(Unphased.)* Have the people sit down in groups.

THREE Jesus, this isn't enough.

JESUS On the green grass. Have them sit in groups of fifty or a hundred.

NARRATOR So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred.
(Disciples gesture/mime for crowd to sit.)

TWO This is not going to go well.

ONE A crumb is better than nothing, I guess.

THREE Don't tease me. I'd love a crumb right now.

NARRATOR *(Jesus mimes the actions the Narrator speaks.)*
Jesus took the five loaves and one fish –

ONE Two fish.

NARRATOR Jesus took the five loaves and two fish – looked up toward heaven and
blessed them.

JESUS *(Quietly.)* Thank you, father.

DISCIPLES *(Prayerfully.)* Thank you, father.

NARRATOR Then, he broke the loaves into pieces... a lot of pieces.

JESUS Hand this out to the people over on that side.

ONE Yes, teacher. *(Takes handful of imaginary bread. Distributes it to the real
crowd.)*

JESUS Here, give this to the people over there.

TWO Right away. (*Arms become overwhelmed with imaginary food as they take it to the crowd on the opposite side.*)

JESUS And this fish, make sure everyone gets enough.

THREE (*Receiving the final handful of invisible food.*) Jesus, how is this –
JESUS looks at THREE with a tender smile. No more needs to be said.

NARRATOR It was a miracle.

ONE There's enough for everyone!

TWO More than enough!

THREE Leftovers. Everyone's had their fill and there's piles of leftovers.

NARRATOR The disciples picked up-

DISCIPLES (*shocked*) -twelve baskets-

NARRATOR -of remaining bread and fish.
(*Disciples snack/take their fill while Jesus speaks -*)

JESUS Now everyone is fed. Go and rest back in the boat.

ONE (*Mouth full, gesturing to the crowd.*) They're leaving.

TWO They're satisfied.

THREE (*Mouth full.*) I'm satisfied!

JESUS Come. Our work is done here. (*To the crowd.*) Make your way home.

Jesus and disciples act out what the narrator speaks -

NARRATOR And so the disciples went to the boat, bellies full and immediately fell asleep. Jesus walked up into the hills by himself to pray.
(*Beat.*)
And then suddenly, a great storm rolled in...

Disciples look up from their sleep, scared –

NARRATOR But that's a story for another day.

