

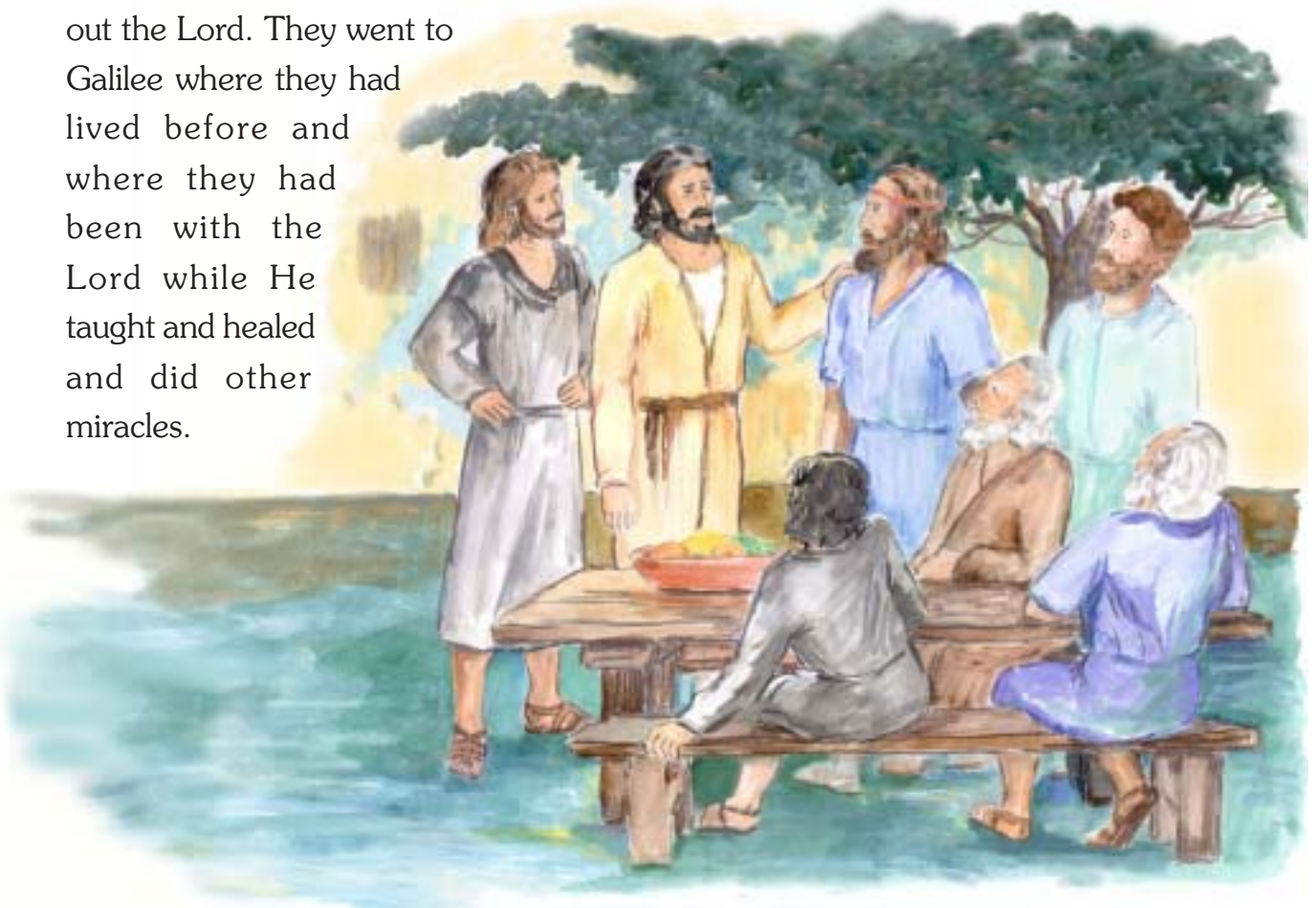
Breakfast by the Sea

by Kurt Horigan Asplundh

Can you imagine what life must have been like for the disciples after Easter morning? You may remember that the disciples were men who followed the Lord after He was born on this earth. They had been following the Lord for three years, seeing Him every day.

Then, they had seen how the Lord was crucified and knew that His body had been buried. Wonderful things had happened afterward; the women came to the sepulcher early on that morning we call Easter, found the stone rolled away and the Lord's body gone. Later, all the disciples were together when the Lord came and stood among them to show that He was still alive. He said, "Peace be with you." They were glad when they saw Him, but suddenly He had vanished from sight. Where was He now?

The disciples felt alone and lost without the Lord. They went to Galilee where they had lived before and where they had been with the Lord while He taught and healed and did other miracles.



Some of them had been fishermen, so Simon Peter who was one of them said, “I am going fishing.” Thomas, Nathanael, James and John, and two other disciples joined him.

The seven of them went out in a boat and worked all night casting out their nets and pulling them back, but without success. They didn’t catch any fish. Their hearts were not in it. They wanted to do the Lord’s work. Can you imagine staying up all night fishing from a boat? It would be dark and lonely on the sea. And think how sad and discouraged you would be if you didn’t catch anything.

When morning came and it grew light, they saw someone standing on the shore. The Man called out to them and said, “Do you have any food? Have you caught any fish?”





They didn't know who it was on the shore. I think you know who it was, though, don't you? It would be a happy surprise for the disciples.

They called back to the Man. "No. We haven't caught any fish."

Then He told them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. There, they would find some fish.

So they tried it.

Well, guess what happened! After they cast the net and started to pull it back again they couldn't lift it into the boat because it was so full of fish. It was a miracle! They hadn't caught any fish all night, but now, in one cast, they caught so many they couldn't even pull them into the boat.

This was a miracle! Because of it, the disciple John knew immediately who it was on the shore. He said to Simon Peter, "It is the Lord!" He knew it was the Lord because no one else could do a miracle like this.

When Simon Peter heard this news, he wanted to go to the Lord as fast as possible. Pulling on his coat, he dove into the water and swam to shore. The others stayed in the boat, rowing it to the shore. They were not far from land, but they came slowly because they were pulling the heavy net full of fish.

When the disciples came to the land, they found another surprise. They saw a fire with some fish and bread cooking on it. The Lord said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught” (John 21:10). He would add them to the fish He was already cooking.

Simon Peter ran over and helped to drag the net out of the water to take some fish to the Lord. When they counted them, the disciples found they had caught 153 large fish, and the net hadn’t even broken!



Then the Lord invited them to eat some of the bread and fish, to eat breakfast there on the shore with Him. They were amazed. They knew it was the Lord, but they still wanted to ask, “Who are You?”—just to be sure. But none of them dared to ask Him.



Now the disciples began to realize that the Lord would always be with them, even when they didn't see Him. After Easter the Lord completed His work on earth and returned to heaven, but He is still near everyone on earth. He showed this by being on the shore this morning and helping and feeding the disciples.

The disciples remembered that the Lord wanted them to be “fishers of men,” to teach His truths to all people and to help them to love Him. They had seen the Lord teaching people for three years and now they knew they could do this, and He always would be with them to help. Hadn't they caught a great number of fish when they cast their nets on the right side as He had told them? Now, if they would continue to obey Him, the Lord would give them success in their work as disciples.



Our life is the same. Without the Lord's help, we can't be truly happy. It is like working through the whole night without catching any fish. Remembering that the Lord is always with us brings us hope, like the morning of a new day. Loving and obeying the Lord brings us close to Him, so that He can give us our daily bread, just like He fed the disciples that morning on the shore. Then we can go forward, like His disciples, to serve the Lord and His church in our own lives.

This story was written from John 21:1-14 for the Office of Education's Early Childhood Religion Program. For information about the program call 215-914-4949 or email oed@newchurch.edu.

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