

Biblical Background

JOHN 21:1-14

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING: We find seven of the Apostles gathered on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, also known as the Sea of Galilee. They are probably very near the home of Peter and Andrew who are brothers, and shared a room in the home of their father John. Prior to their call by Jesus, they had fished the waters of the Sea of Tiberias in partnership with their father and others from the village. They have been directed to go to this location in anticipation of meeting Jesus there.

TERMS: "The disciple whom Jesus loved" We have identified this character in this Gospel as its author, the Apostle John. He was seated at the Passover supper in the position of greatest intimacy, immediately to the left of Jesus.

"Peter put on some clothes, for he was naked" Commercial fisherman often had to dive into water to retrieve their casting nets in the shallows. Peter would have worn a loin cloth of some sort (for the sake of modesty) but now wraps his upper garment around his shoulders as he wades through the shallow water toward Jesus.

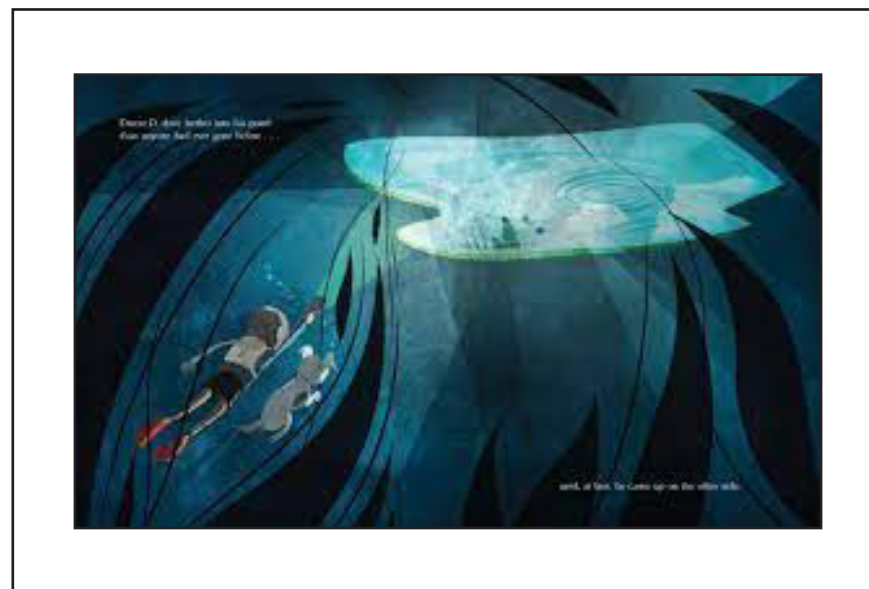
"153 fish" Much ink has been spent trying to decipher the meaning of this number. Some have suggested that this is the number of the known languages in the world at that time, thus the catch of fish was emblematic to the catch of men and women that the Apostles would accomplish. Others have suggested that there were 153 known species of fish in the world. Again, the catch becomes a metaphor for the eventual evangelistic efforts of the Apostles. Or maybe there were exactly 153 market sized fish in the nets. There were so many that the nets could not be pulled aboard the ship or it would sink. These were formally commercial fishermen, they knew how to assess this bountiful haul.

CULTURAL INSIGHTS: The fishermen are returning from their night time efforts to catch fish. As they approach the shore they see someone signaling to them from a distance. They do not know it is Jesus yet. Jesus would have been able to tell that they had not caught many fish because he saw that their boat was riding very high on the water. He offers advice to the fishermen to cast their nets (one last time?) to the right side of the boat. When they do, they haul in a huge catch that amounts to about 750 lbs of fish. This is a third post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to the Apostles. The previous two appearance accounts were detailed in chapter 20 of the Gospel of John. The fish are caught with gill nets and brought to market in the morning. These fish only come into the shallows of the lake at night in search of bait fish for consumption. When the sun rises they return to the deep waters in the center of the lake.

INSIGHTS INTO MEANING: The Apostles return to do what they do best - fishing. Jesus meets them where they are at and invites them to something new. He will make them "fishers of men". The memories would recall the miraculous catch of fish detailed when these same men left their nets and began to follow Jesus. This Gospel reading is part of a chapter that was added to the original Gospel account by John. John was the last living Apostle. All the other eleven Apostles had died as martyrs. John adds this chapter (Chapter 21) to his original Gospel to dispel those considerations and to remind the faith community that it was to St. Peter that Jesus had conferred the "keys of the kingdom of God".

Family Activities

SHARING THE MISSION AT HOME
AND IN THE WORLD



QUESTION OF THE WEEK: What stirrings can you find within your heart and imagination that gives you joy? Take 5 minutes together as a family in silence to listen to them. Share with one another what rises in your imaginations. Celebrate it together, take one action step like the apostles in faith to see what you might find.

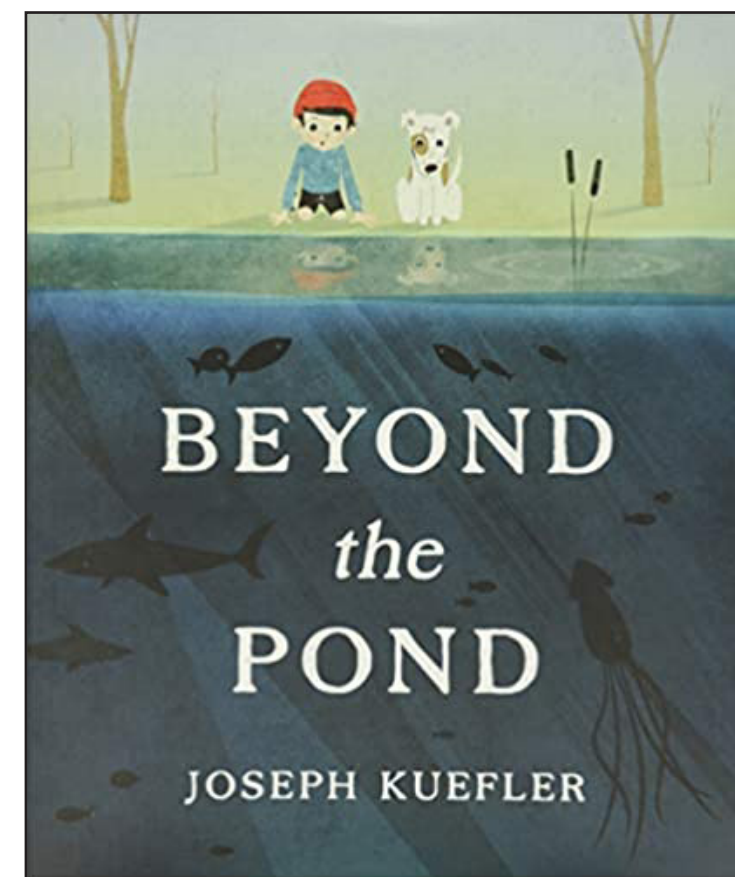
GOSPEL CHARACTER QUALITIES: SEEING WITHIN
WONDER

FAMILY ACTIVITIES: Take time out as a family to go and have a picnic by a lake, river, ocean. Spend the day exploring and looking deeper together. Talk about what lies below the surface of the water, imagine all the life that lives there. Interact with it in what ways the day invites. As the day closes explore together what lies beneath the surface in each family member. Share with one another some of the wonders and hopes that lie within each family members inspired imagination.

PARENT BROCHURE
CYCLE C 3RD SUNDAY
OF EASTER

Living Grace

"IN THE RISEN CHRIST, PARADISE IS RESTORED!"



*In **Beyond the Pond** we learn that there is wonder all around us and that things are less ordinary than they first appear. Just behind an ordinary house filled with too little fun, a little boy decides that today will be the day he explores the depths of his pond. Accompanied by his loyal dog, he swims past squid, fish, and sharks, and eventually finds an opening on the other side. The magical land beyond the pond is filled with fun and exotic creatures, and he discovers a not-so-ordinary world that will change him forever.*

Art & Faith

CELEBRATING THE BEAUTY & TRADITION
OF SACRED ART



GREAT CATCH

*Serigraph Print by John August Swanson ~ 1993
Los Angeles, California, USA*

EXPLORING THE ART:

Contemporary artist John August Swanson just recently died in September 2021. He painted in oil, watercolor, acrylic, and mixed media, and was an independent printmaker of limited edition serigraphs, lithographs, etchings, and other prints. His art reflected his strong heritage of storytelling, inherited from his Mexican mother and Swedish father. John Swanson's narratives are direct and easily understood. He addressed human values, cultural roots, and the quest for self-discovery through visual images. These include Bible stories and celebrations, circuses, concerts, and operas. He optimistically embraced life and spiritual transformation. His style was detailed, complex, and elaborate. It was influenced by the imagery of Islamic and medieval miniatures and Russian iconography, the color of Latin American folk art, and the tradition of Mexican muralists. In January, 2001, a mosaic reproducing the above print, Great Catch, was made by craftsmen in Italy from Byzantine glass. The 6' by 8' mosaic is installed in the foyer of the Student Union at Concordia University in Irvine, California.

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Sunday Gospel

JOHN 21:1-14

At that time, Jesus revealed himself to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way.

Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples.

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."

They said to him, "We also will come with you."

So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?"

They answered him, "No."

So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something."

So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish.

So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord."

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea.

The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish.

When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught."

So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish.

Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast."

And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord.

Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish.

This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead.

Read-aloud video link:

[BEYOND THE POND](#)

Written & Illustrated by Joseph Kuefler

Making the Connections

FOR ADULTS

LISTENING TO THE PROMPTINGS OF THE SPIRIT FROM WITHIN, YIELDS ABUNDANCE BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION.

In our two stories, we are invited to embrace the unimaginable, yet attainable. What a unique invitation! The apostles are down in the dumps. After an extraordinary adventure with Jesus, turning the world upside-down, everything ended in an unimaginable, tragic loss. Yet, what a turn they experienced when they discovered the stone rolled away - a big twist in the adventure - it is not over!! Jesus lives!! We can imagine all they are trying to process, now back in Galilee back to their ordinary days and lives, but holding within them something so extraordinary, they cannot even begin to find a way to describe it.

In our children's story, Ernest finds himself in a similar situation. He is having a normal day in his ordinary life when something extraordinary begins to tug on his stability. What is within this deep beautiful magical mysterious pond he wonders? Everything is so calm, on the exterior, but his imagination is stirring with the possibility of a magical world beyond. This image helps our understanding what might be going on within the apostles at this stage of their journey. On the outside everything looks back to normal, calm, and ordinary. But within their hearts, a brand-new world is starting to fill their wildest hopes and imaginations.

Ernest sees the surface of the pond, but something tells him there is more. The apostles see someone, but they have to look closer and deeper. There is something about this person that invites them to wake up and listen - there is something more here. They follow his direction to cast their nets to the right. They listen, they respond, and their nets are filled to the breaking point - filled beyond imagination! Like the apostles, Ernest listens to the still small voice inside him that gives him the courage to look deeper, under the surface, listen from within, and what a magical journey was offered to him. This is the way of faith - faith in the Risen Christ! Jesus teaches his apostles how to find this kind of faith - stay awake, look deeply, listen, and take the leap, and a whole new world of abundance will be yours! By following Jesus, the apostles find abundance beyond anything they could imagine.

This is Easter and this is our life as a Christian people - following Jesus through our suffering, embracing faith-fostering companions, accessing resources for everything we need. And most importantly, taking this call back to our daily lives - gathering around the table, around the altar, around the campfire, home to the pond. But because of call of Jesus, nothing in our daily lives looks the same. The call within us makes the ordinary world extraordinary.

That night Jesus taught his disciples to look at what lies beneath the surface by trusting what was stirring within. We can imagine that they looked at each other and said, "This is good. This is very, very good." In Jesus, God's creation - paradise - is restored. When we take the same steps, the same leap of faith as Ernest and the apostles, we become Easter people. We too, will find that fullness of heart and be able to proclaim, "It is good. It is all very, very good!"

Making the Connections

FOR CHILDREN

YOUR STORY: What is your favorite body of water to visit? Is it a pond, river, a lake or the ocean? What is your favorite activity to do there? Who do you usually go to the water with? What is their favorite activity to do there? Have you ever gone fishing before? Was it fun? What qualities does someone need to be a good fisherman?

THE CHILDREN'S STORY: What did Ernest love to do at his pond? Who did he like to go to his pond with? What questions filled Ernest's imagination about the pond? How did Ernest get to explore what was below the surface of the pond?

THE GOSPEL STORY: Did the disciples who were out fishing recognize Jesus at first? How did they come to trust him? What was the result of them listening, trusting and acting on how Jesus was directing them? How did they know that the man was Jesus? What were the clues? How did they celebrate their catch? And with who?

Jesus looked different, but felt the same, and the results of being together, abundance and healing still happened. What do you think Jesus was trying to teach his closest friends and followers.