



74th Year

July 26, 2026

Pamphlet #30 (3817)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Matthew 14:14-22)

The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand

At that time, Jesus saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Today's Gospel reading describes with striking simplicity one of the Lord's most well-known miracles: the multiplication of the five loaves and the two fish. It is particularly significant that this miracle is recorded by all four Evangelists.

As the Evangelist Matthew relates, when the Lord learned of the beheading of John the Baptist, He departed by boat to a deserted place by Himself. However, the crowds heard about it

and followed Him on foot from the neighboring towns. When Christ saw so many people, He had compassion for them and healed the sick whom they brought to Him. As the hour grew late, His disciples reminded Him that the place was deserted and that He should dismiss the crowds so they could go to the nearby villages and buy food for themselves. But Christ's answer surely surprised the disciples: "You give them something to eat." There is no need for them to leave; you yourselves give them food, He told them.

A change in the way we view things

With this command of Christ, we see a reversal of ordinary human thinking and an elevation to the level of sacrifice, love, and miracle working. In this way, the Disciples gradually learn that, as imitators of their Teacher, they themselves must offer what they have. They must also acquire the awareness that the solution to the problems that arise should begin with themselves, placing their trust in the power, providence, and love of God. In other words, the true Christian does not shift his own responsibility onto someone else, but tries to respond to what he himself ought to do in every circumstance.

If we attempt to view our own lives, ministry, and actions through this exhortation of Christ, we may discover that we too, not infrequently, seek to shift our personal responsibility onto others. For example, in our daily lives we very often observe many and varied problems: that our society is not developing harmoniously; that young people are faltering; that the institution of the family is undergoing a profound crisis; that the quality of education is declining; that love is disappearing, as are peace and justice; that hypocrisy dominates interpersonal relationships; and that millions of people are suffering from hunger, while wars continue to intensify human misery. But is it enough merely to describe the tragic conditions of our times and speak about what should be done by others, the "responsible authorities," or ought we at the same time to examine seriously what we ourselves can contribute, without excluding ourselves from the responsibility?

Living the Gospel in practice

The late Archbishop Anastasios of Albania wrote: “You speak about the suffering that exists; relieve it. About the hypocrisy that prevails; confront it with your sincerity. About heartlessness and injustice; rebel against them through your active kindness.” Yet, most often, we remain at the level of describing evil without striving for the triumph of what is good. The disciples of Christ had very little – five loaves and two fish. They offered them to Him with faith, and He took them into His hands, blessed them, and thousands of people were fed. In a similar way, let us also offer Christ whatever abilities we have, our good intentions, whatever we possess, whether little or much, and He will repeat the miracle. Our efforts will bear fruit, producing “a hundredfold harvest” (Luke 8:8), and many of our fellow men will be satiated.

The food of the whole world

Through His word and His holy Gospel commandments, through the mystery of the Divine Eucharist, and through the life of the Church as a whole, Christ nourishes us with heavenly bread and the drink of incorruption. He feeds us with His holy Body and Blood, which are offered to us for the forgiveness of our sins and for our participation in eternal life and in the Kingdom of God.

May we always prepare ourselves with fear and respect for God, with faith and love, with repentance, forgiveness, humility, and a purified conscience, so that we may participate, as worthily as possible, in the mystery of Christ’s Love; in His sacrifice for the salvation of “all those descended of Adam” (the whole world).

Archimandrite N. K.

July 26, 2026: 8th Sunday of Matthew

Venerable Martyr Paraskevi (2nd century);
Hieromartyr Hermolaus (†305).

Grave Tone – Eothinon: 8 – Epistle: Galatians 3:23-4:5
– Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

NEXT SUNDAY: August 2, 9th Sunday of Matthew
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17 – Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

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