

## The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

### Matthew 14:14-22

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick. And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto Him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to Me. And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. And straightway Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. (KJV)

### Holy Fathers of the First Six Councils

#### John 17:1-13

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word., Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. (KJV)

Both Gospel messages for today describe the Lord Jesus Christ's interest in nourishing His followers, St. Matthew's Gospel tells how Jesus fed the hungry multitude with five loaves and two fish after healing the sick.

St. John's Gospel mentions Jesus having provided enlightening words to the men given to Him. Both Gospels make clear attentive believers are nourished by the Lord Jesus Christ in multiple ways.

Believers attending the Divine Liturgy hear the life-empowering words of the Holy Gospel. The Gospel message is to be taken to heart and to be incorporated into the believer's daily life.

The Gospel will shape the believer to a more Christ-pleasing life and lead the believer to the Heavenly Kingdom. During the Divine Liturgy the believer is further blessed by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Jesus Christ is interested in the believer's total well-being, body, mind and soul. Jesus Christ offers the teachings and nourishment for the health and wellness of body, mind and soul.

Refraining from sin and living in Christ enhances personal well-being. The Church proclaims Jesus Christ's teachings benefitting the person from birth until departure from earthly life.

During the Divine Liturgy, Jesus Christ opens the believer's vision beyond earthly life to life eternal. St. John's Gospel message for today reveals Jesus' interest in eternal life for His followers.

Believers are constantly challenged to live in Christ and act in Christ-pleasing ways. The mind, heart and soul benefit when immersed in Christ and nourished by Christ.

Regular and serious participation in the Divine Liturgy leads the believer on the path to eternal life. The Gospel provides nourishment and direction for all stages of life.

The Holy Body and Blood of Christ when partaken at each Divine Liturgy keeps the believer united with and empowered by Jesus Christ. The Church is resolute in addressing the needs of believers.

Believers have an attendant responsibility to follow Jesus Christ and to embrace the Gospel's life-changing wisdom. Believers are to be faithful in partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Being a Christian is the highest honor in life. The honor carries with it the responsibility to live in ways pleasing to Jesus Christ. The Church offers the direction for a Christ-pleasing life.

The Church encourages repentance when believers need to correct their lives and return to the path to the heavenly Kingdom. Thank God for the renewal in Christ that is always possible through repentance.

Now is the time to take the Gospel message seriously. Rejoice and be abundantly grateful to be united with Jesus Christ by partaking of His Precious Body and Blood.

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The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost. The Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Councils. Holy Greatmartyr Marina July 17//30, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic