

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

CHRIST'S MIRACLE OF FEEDING THE 5,000

CHRIST CONTINUES TO SATISFY OUR "HUNGER"

Wherever Christ went during His public ministry, a large crowd was always there to greet Him. Some came out of mere curiosity, while others sought out the Lord with the hope that He would touch their lives in some miraculous way. Still others simply wanted to be in His presence because they truly believed that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.

All four evangelists record the story of what was one the largest gathering Christ attracted. Seeking a place to rest one day, our Saviour retreated to a remote region along the Sea of Galilee. When His destination became known, however, He was quickly joined by some 5,000 people form the surrounding villages. Concerned for their hunger, our Lord performed a miracle which defies description: He was able to feed the multitude there with only 5 loves of bread and two small fish! The gospels tell us that there were even 12 baskets of fragments left over!

The feeding of the 5,000 is reminiscent of God providing MANNA in the wilderness for the Israelites as they journeyed to the Promise Land. More importantly, the Church Fathers see in this miraculous event an image of the HOLY EUCHARIST. At the Divine Liturgy, everyone who comes forward **"in the fear of God with faith and love"** to receive the Body and Blood of Christ has their spiritual hunger satisfied. Indeed, as the priest prays at every Holy Liturgy: **"The Lamb of God is broken and distributed, broken but not divided, ever-eaten yet never consumed, but sanctifying those who partake of It."**