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## **H.E. Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden's Homily on the 8th Sunday of Matthew**



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(The Miracle of the Five Loaves)

St. George Cathedral of Stockholm

Sunday, August 3, 2025

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, the Holy Gospel presents us with one of the most beloved miracles of our Lord; the feeding of the five thousand (Matthew 14:14-22). This is a story of physical nourishment, and divine revelation of God's love and providence.

As St. John Chrysostom notes, the miracle begins not with bread, but with compassion. "He saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards

them, and He healed their sick.”

Before any physical need is met, the Lord tends to the suffering of the soul and body. His mercy acts and heals. Christ does not simply give bread; He gives Himself.

The disciples come to Christ with the problem, saying that the people are hungry, but Jesus responds, “You give them something to eat.” Here, the Lord invites human participation in divine work. He does not need the loaves and fish, yet He chooses to utilize us.

As St. Cyril of Alexandria teaches us, “our five loaves may seem insignificant, but in the hands of Christ, they become abundance.” When we offer Him what little we have; our time, our talents, our repentance, He transforms them all.

The miracle is not just about satisfying physical hunger; it is also a divine sign pointing us to the Bread of Life; Christ Himself. The Church is the green pasture where the multitudes sit and are fed; not with five loaves, but with the Incarnate Word Himself.

“And they took up what was left over; twelve baskets full.” God’s blessings are abundant and overflowing, yet never wasted. The twelve baskets remind us of the Twelve Apostles and the missionary ministry of the Church; to gather, preserve, and distribute the grace of Christ to the ends of the earth.

Let us then learn from today’s Gospel, to trust in God’s provision, to bring our needs to Christ, but also to be ready to serve, to recognize the Holy Eucharist as the ultimate fulfillment of all hunger, and to never forget that what we offer to Christ, He transforms beyond measure. Amen!

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