



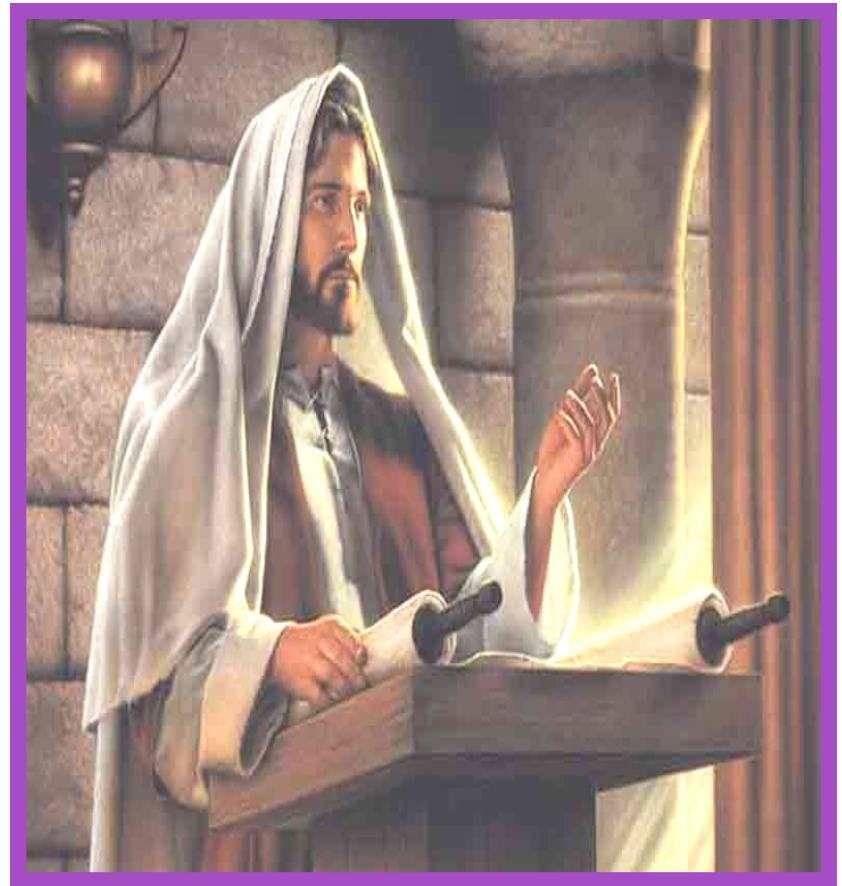
seen with the soul what we could not with our eyes. We are placed above them; since of us it was written: *Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed* (Jn. xx. 29). Have we grasped what this multitude did not understand? We have been truly fed: in that we have been enabled to reach to the marrow of the barley.

*These men when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said: This is of a truth the Prophet.* He was the Lord of the Prophets, the Fulfiller of the prophets, the Sanctifier of the Prophets, but also a Prophet. For to Moses was it said: *I will raise up to them a prophet like to thee* (Deut. xviii. 15). Like him in the flesh, but not like him in glory. This promise of the Lord is to be understood of Christ is clearly set forth in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts vii. 37). And of Himself the Lord says: *A prophet hath no honor in his own country* (Jn. iv. 4). The Lord is a Prophet and is the Word of God, and without the Word of God no prophet prophesies... We have received a Prophet Who is the Word of God... made Flesh and is Lord both of the Prophets and of the Angels. Amen.



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**SERMON ON  
THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE LOAVES  
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH  
# 146 - 1**



**JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT  
LAETARE SUNDAY**

## Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

Volume 1 - Pages 1606 - 1607 (1962 edition)

Commentary on the Gospel of John 6: 1-15

by: Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor

...The Lord is on the mountain (cf. II Pet. i. 18), that is, the *Word on high*. So what took place on the mountain is not hidden in lowliness, nor to be lightly passed by, but to be contemplated with reverence. He saw the multitudes and knew they were hungry. In pity He feeds them, not only because of His goodness, but also because of His power... Unless His power supported His goodness, the multitude would remain unfed and hungry.

The Disciples, who with the Lord were also hungry, were anxious to feed the people, that they might not continue in hunger; but they had not the means to feed them. The Lord asks them where they could buy bread to feed the multitude. Scripture adds, *and this he said to try him*: meaning the Disciple Philip, to whom He had put the question. He himself knew what He would do... *Andrew said: There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes, but what are these among so many?...*

Let us briefly review these events. The five barley loaves represent the Five Books of Moses; and with reason are they barley loaves, not wheaten; for they relate to the Old Testament... the nature of barley is that it is covered with a husk of chaff which is not easily removed... The letter of the Old Testament is clothed in a vesture of corporeal rites; if anyone reaches to its inward marrow, he eats and is satisfied.

A certain boy carrying five barley loaves and two fishes stands for the Jewish People, who with a boy's understanding, carried, but did not eat them. For that which they carried sealed up, burthened them; opened out, they fed from them.

The two fishes signify the two exalted types of the Old Testament, the Priest and the King; who were anointed to sanctify and rule the people. He Whom they prefigured came in time, in the divine

secret revealed in Christ; In time He came Who was signified in the marrow of the barley, and was concealed by its husk. He came Who in Himself alone fulfills both figures; that of the priest, and that of the King. As priest through the Victim Which offers itself to God on our behalf; as King, because we are ruled by Him; and the things that were carried close sealed are now opened out. He has fulfilled in Himself all that was promised in the Old Testament.

He commanded the loaves to be broken; and in being broken they are multiplied. For the Five great Books of Moses, how many books did they become when they were broken up by expounding them, that is, by discussing them? Since the ignorance of the first people was concealed in this barley, of the first people was it said: *But even until this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart* (II Cor. iii. 15). The veil was not yet taken away because Christ had not yet come; nor had the veil of the Temple yet been rent by Him as He hung upon His Cross. The ignorance of the people was due to the Law, so the *trying* of the Lord made clear the ignorance of the Disciples.

...The number of people fed signifies the people who were placed under the Law. There were five thousand because they were under the law, which is discovered in the Five Books of Moses. So also was it for this reason the sick came from under the five porches, and were not healed. But He cured the sick man there (Jn. v. 2-9) Who here feeds a multitude from five loaves. They also reclined on grass; and so they savored of the flesh, and were content only with carnal things: *for all flesh is grass* (Is. xl. 6).

What are these fragments which the people were unable to eat? They are to be understood as the truths which are more obscure to the understanding, and which the multitude cannot grasp. What then is to be done but entrust these higher truths of the mind, which the multitude cannot comprehend, to those who are fit both to grasp them and to teach them to others: as were the Apostles? For this reason *twelve baskets* were filled.

... What their eyes did for them faith does for us. We have