Carême IV 2014

1. Intro
   1. We began Lent: “not on bread alone doth a man live, but by every Word which proceeds from the Father.”
   2. Half-way through Lent, we reflect on this truth once again, in the context of the mystical multiplication of the loaves and fishes. All four Gospels contain a version, each one highlighting different aspects of the miracle.
2. In St. Matthew’s Gospel:
   1. “And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying: This is a desert place, and the hour is now past.”
      1. Hilary: “The times of the Law being now at an end, and buried together with John [the Baptist], [the Baptist’s] disciples then passed over from the Law to the Gospel, and told the Lord what had happened. And so the Law being ended, the Word of God, embarking on a ship, enters the Church, and passes over into a desert place [in order] to enter into hearts yet empty of the knowledge of God.”
   2. “And he coming forth saw a great multitude, and had compassion on them, and healed their sick.”
      1. Origen: “*He first heals the sick*, so that being restored to health they might become partakers of the bread of blessing; for they who are still infirm cannot receive the bread of the blessing of Jesus.”
   3. Disciples: “Send away the multitudes, that going into the towns, they may buy themselves victuals.”
      1. Origen: “You think that if the multitudes, hungering for food, go away from Me, they will find it in the villages rather than with Me? in the assemblies of men…and in the villages, rather than had they remained with Me? But I declare to you that they are not in need of that…[but rather] of that of which you think they have no need, namely, Myself.”
         1. How often do we look first to the logic and comforts of the world first, rather than to the logic and “comforts” of the Cross?
   4. “Give ye them to eat.”
      1. We, like the disciples, think that what we have to offer to God is insufficient: merely five loaves and two fishes.
         1. Origen: “As long as the five barley loaves and the two fishes were not brought to Jesus, they do not begin to increase or be multiplied, or have power to feed the multitude.”
      2. Hilary: “the hunger of the multitude is satisfied by the word of God coming to them from the [five books of Moses] and the [two fishes] of the Law and the Prophets; and the abundance of the divine goodness, kept in reserve for [all nations], has overflowed from the source of eternal Food unto the filling of the Twelve Apostles.