

Monday, Third Week of Easter

John 6:22-29

Today we start a series of Gospel readings from John chapter 6; Jesus' "Bread of Life" discourse. This is John's teaching on the Eucharist and comes after two important miracles, both of which reveal to us who Jesus is. His feeding of the 5000 fulfills the Old Testament when God fed manna to the Israelites wandering in the desert (Ex. Chapter 16), and when He walked on water, Jesus used the sacred words "I am," God's sacred and unspeakable name, to identify Himself. John note that this series of events is around the time of Passover (Jn. 6:4). It was at Passover (another year, of course) when Jesus endured His Passion, death, and Resurrection, which we celebrate at every Mass. Passover is the Jewish festival that celebrates God's work of redemption from slavery and which Jesus transformed into our redemption from sin.

Jesus tells us not to seek for food that cannot last. Instead, He invites us to seek food that endures to Eternal Life, which He is offering us. He means Himself in the Eucharist. This week we will read this discourse bit by bit and tomorrow we will read Jesus saying that He is the Bread of Life (v.35) a statement that was shocking then and to a certain extent is still shocking! God who created everything and who is the source of all life, first condescended to become man, one of us, and then in order that we can more profoundly share in Christ's work of our redemption, becomes bread for us. But not just any bread; He is the food that will last.

Last year when we were reflecting on these readings the church doors were closed and we could only watch Mass live-streamed. Now the church doors are open, and Jesus is welcoming us back so that He can feed us with Himself and give us all the graces that we need to grow in faith.

Because Jesus is really and truly present in the Eucharist, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, this means that we can spend time in His presence outside of Mass. How wonderful that we have this opportunity in this parish, as Fr. Naz was saying in his homily yesterday. Eucharistic Adoration is not complicated; we come, genuflect (on two knees if we can) and then either sit or kneel before the Lord. We may like to read a prayer book or the Bible or may be just sit in a rare moment of silence, giving ourselves a few moments of peace in our busy week, and giving the Lord a few moments to speak to us, heart to heart.

It does not matter if we are there for five minutes or an hour – what matters is – that we give the Lord time to speak to us. The crowd following Jesus took time to seek Him out. They wanted more. Can we do the same?