

August 8th, 2021
19th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B

1st Reading: 1 Kings 19:4 – 8.

God strengthens Elijah for his journey.

Psalm 34:2 – 3,4 – 5,6 – 7, 8 – 9.

Taste and see the goodness of our God.

2nd Reading: Ephesians 4:30 – 5:2.

Gospel: John 6:41 – 51.

God gives us God's flesh for the life of the world.

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

Friends this is the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time of Cycle B. Ordinary Time is divided into 4 parts and part 3 is 5 Sundays (from the 17th to the 21st) and although B is considered to be the year of Mark, in Part 3 we get John's Gospel, Chapter 6, on the "Bread of Life." Since the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, it is always a good time to refresh ourselves and really come to terms with what it is that we believe the Eucharist is and how it brings refreshment and strength to our journey. This question takes on even more value considering the recent Pew survey on Catholics and how few really believe in the "real presence" of Jesus in the Eucharist. Now I question who did they ask and how did they ask it?

The Bishop, or more accurately the Office of Worship, wanted us to use the examples of miraculous or inspirational saints like Blessed Imelda Lambertini (ANYONE EVER HEAR OF HER?). She was born in 1322 in Bologna, Italy. I never heard of her either! It is a fascinating story but has little to do with how I find Jesus in my world or even have Jesus become one with me in my daily encounters with Jesus. Certainly, it has little to do with halos appearing but more to do with peacemaking, crying, laughing, forgiving, and loving, so that my heart and eyes are

open to seeing the real presence of Jesus: “I am the bread of life, offered for the life of the world.” It is my hope that each of us can leave here today nourished, refreshed, replenished, and fed: what a very extravagant gift we have been given!

We, like Elijah in our reading from Kings, are offered food for the journey through this earthly life into eternity. Has anyone here ever felt like Elijah? He had faithfully done all that was asked of him, including killing the 450 priests of Baal, and now Queen Jez’bel wanted his hide. On top of that the Israelites for whom he had done all of this were already unfaithful to God. So, he goes out to the desert to die; but God had a different idea; and guess whose idea takes primacy. God gave him and gives us all we need to fulfill God’s will. Sometimes we just need refueling and believing that our God, like any good parent, will provide us with whatever we need – I know I experienced that back in November. I only wish I could find the words that can adequately describe the love that covered me.

I feel the overall message God is trying to get in my head/heart today is found in the conclusion of the letter to the Ephesians. Let’s listen to it again: “Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with God and learn a life of love. Observe how the Christ loved us. Christ’s love was not cautious but extravagant. Christ didn’t love to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.”

Again, I hope we can move forward with our celebration becoming what we eat: Taste and see ...

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