

2021 August 15

## Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading, Proverbs 9.1-6, "Lay aside immaturity and live, and walk in the way of insight." (6)

The Psalm 34, "Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing." (10b)

Second Reading, Ephesians 5.15-20, "Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (17)

The Gospel, John 6.51-58 "My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink." (55)

### **True drink and true food**

Jesus is in no mood to make any compromise regarding eating his flesh and drinking his blood. In fact, he never ever made any compromise about anything he did or said. His words once said remain forever true. People at that time, and in this time as well, find it difficult to understand the sacrificial meal he is offering with his body and blood. They and we find it difficult to understand the depth and meaning of his sacrifice on the cross in obedience to the Father, and feeding us out of this sacrificial offering with his body and blood. We need to pray every day for enlightenment on this mystery and accept it blindly. It is mystery, it is truth just because Jesus said it, and he is the one who is offering it to us.

As the book of Proverbs tell us today, 'There is plenty of immaturity in us, which we must lay aside and choose to live, and walk in the way of insight.' (Proverbs 9.6) Once we have enough faith in the words of Jesus we are likely to accept what he said about his body and blood becoming our food and drink, which ultimately leads us to eternal life. This food he offers is the food for eternity. We must hunger and thirst for it.

Leading us to eternity is not the only purpose of Jesus feeding us with this food and drink, it is also an invitation to become what we eat and drink, that is, to become food and drink for the people of this world. Our communion with Jesus must transform us into the body and blood of Jesus. In other words, we become what we eat and drink. The purpose of this transformation is that we do what Jesus did on earth in his earthly existence. Jesus must go on living in the world, on earth, until the end of ages. This is possible only in and through us. The process of dividing and sharing the body and blood of Jesus must continue in our sharing of the self, our time, talent and treasure for the people of this world at this time on behalf of Jesus. That is the way we become 'other Christs', 'Altar Christus'.

Just as the living Father sent Jesus, and he lives because of the Father, (John 6.57) so those who participate in the body and blood of Jesus will live because of him. In his turn, Jesus sends us as he was sent by the Father. Those whom we reach out in and for Jesus will live because of us, thereby we too become life-giving sources along with Jesus. This is the meaning of the baptismal mission we were given, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28.19)

This Sunday of the year happens to be the feast of Assumption. Our blessed Mother was the first Christian to literally become the Body and Blood of Christ; in fact, Christ's humanity is supplied by Mary with her body and blood. This is not only physically true but mystically also. We humans are invited to become mystically what Mary is physically. In our attempts to become the body of Christ our Mother is the true example and fore-runner.

Fr. George