

Sunday, August 1, 2021

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Bread of Life

“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.’” – John 6:35

I bet that if you surveyed a segment of the population on what their wants and needs are in this life, many would say cell phones, computers, or other portable electronic devices. In fact, just take a phone from a teenager and see their reaction. Others would say they want a successful career with financial stability. Some might go deeper and say family happiness or peace in the world. But I imagine that there wouldn't be many who would say, “A deeper relationship with God.”

It is interesting that we find ourselves seeking fulfillment through earthly things. The demands of work are great. Many start their day before sunrise and get home after dark, leaving little time for God or family. This is not what our Lord wants from us. We are putting the things of this world ahead of what is truly important. Success, fame, money, and possessions are nice to have in our daily lives, but they don't bring us closer to Heaven.

In John's Gospel this weekend, we read that Jesus has moved from the crowds and traveled to Capernaum. But the people track Him down, literally hungering for what He offers and what He can do for them. Jesus tells them that they are hungering for the wrong things. He says, “do not work for food that perishes, but for food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” Of course, they did not put together that He was the Son of Man. They were thinking that, like Moses who fed them in the desert, Jesus might also feed them as He did with the loaves and the fish. He reminded them that it was God who fed them, and that Jesus Himself was, in fact, the everlasting bread of life they were seeking and which would bring them fulfillment.

The people in this week's Gospel reading were not happy. They were searching. Many people today are not happy, even though they believe that they have it all. They are searching. True and lasting happiness comes from God...peace, joy, love, and mercy. All of these are found in

the Eucharist - Jesus who is the bread of life. If you have not been to church in a while, this weekend is a good to come home.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes