

Sunday, August 8, 2021

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

## **I am the Bread of Life**

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” – John 6: 51

Throughout the Gospel accounts, we’ve heard the miraculous stories of Jesus healing the lame, bringing sight to the blind, feeding thousands with practically nothing and even raising the dead. Some saw Him as a prophet, and some may have even thought He was a magician or doing unexplainable tricks. But the number of believers grew into the thousands. The Jewish people had been awaiting a messiah, but their expectations were very different from what Jesus was doing and saying.

Jesus appears not as a king or a strong military leader, but rather the humble son of a carpenter. This causes doubt among some despite the great works that He has been performing in their midst. He assures them that He is the one sent by God and ties belief in Him to eternal life. Jesus tells them that He is the Bread of Life and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life. So, do they go all in to follow Jesus, or do they wait for who they expected the Messiah to be?

The same can be said of us today. Many people, even Catholics, have trouble grasping that Jesus is the Bread of Life, that His flesh is true food for the world. This is part of the great mystery of our faith. Our minds cannot comprehend eating human flesh or drinking blood. It is Jesus, truly present in His Body and in His Blood who sustains us as we journey through life. If we are to be the people that God created us to be and fulfill the mission that He gave us to spread the Good News, we need to feast on His Body and Blood. Unfortunately, many put their faith and trust in the things of this world which are passing - money, possessions, or prestige – and not in the things of God who is eternal.

If you truly believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who is the Bread of Life, then you WILL have eternal life. But it takes courageous faith to believe and proclaim this as we do in the creed, and just as importantly, to live it. Have the courage to live what you proclaim so that you can go out and courageously transform the world.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes