

August 19, 2018 – 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B

I Am the Living Bread

Hello - o - o! Is there an echo in here - here - here?

Didn't we sing Psalm 34 just last week? Yes!

"Taste and see the goodness of the Lord".

Haven't we been hearing about Jesus preaching about his being the bread of life for a couple weeks now?

Yes, actually, we have been reading from the 6th chapter of St. John's gospel for four weeks ... and yes his topic is the Eucharist!

OK, now a question for you!

What one word do you like to use to describe God?

[Some likely answers: "God is love!" "God is all-knowing." "God is eternal." "God is our creator." "God is trinity." "God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit."]

This week the word that came to me for describing God is "genius".

God knew that a fantastic way for us to get to know and love God would be if God took on our human likeness, our very flesh, and came and lived with us.

Yes, then we would really get it!

It would sink in to our hearts and minds that God really, really loves us, cares for us each and every moment.

And so God sent Jesus to live with us.

And God had another fantastic idea, namely, a way for all future generations to remember and recall Jesus.

And so Jesus told the people how he would come in the form of bread and wine ... for all time in history!

And, what a genius, our dear Lord, to use the bread and wine.

Why?

Together, bread and wine stimulate each of our five human senses!

What? All five senses? Yes!

1. Our sight - we can see the bread and the wine.
2. Our hearing - as the priest breaks the large host into smaller pieces for us to receive.
3. Our feeling - as the host touches the palm of our hand and then our tongue.
4. Our smelling - we can smell the sweet aroma of the wine.
5. Our tasting - the simplicity of the taste of the host and the stimulating taste of the wine.

What a better way could there be for God to get our attention than to stimulate each of our human senses!?!?

God **wants** to get our attention so that we become more willing

- to relate to God,
- to converse with God,
- to treasure all that God has done for us
- to bring God into our plans for today, tomorrow, and yes, for the rest of our lives!

Do you recall Fr. Patrick's homily last week where he guided us to relate to the Lord by **RPI**?

- By being **rooted** in the Lord
- By **praising** the Lord
- By **imitating** the Lord

Well, because I am an engineer and this is Dream Cruise weekend in Detroit I'd like you to remember **RPM**.

Yes, it could mean "revolutions per minute", like in your car engine.

But I want to use RPM to mean "**Revelations per minute**"!

Yes, the genius of the Lord has been so successful that people all over the world go to Mass to hear what the Lord has to reveal and to build and honor their relationship with the Lord.

The Lord has been so successful that, on the average around the whole world, 243 Masses start each minute of our day ... yes, that is **243 revelations per minute!**

Yes, the genius [there's that word again] of the Lord is so, so effective!

But it does not end with coming to Mass, hearing Scriptures and receiving the body and blood of Jesus.

No, it does not end there.

The Lord would like all that to be a starting point for continuing to build our relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

You may have seen this before, but I am asking the ushers to pass out a card with a simple sketch on it.

In my simple words I think of God asking us to join the "3H Club" where the three H's are:

- Head
- Heart
- Hands.

St. Augustine was much more profound than I'll ever be and he stated it this way: "We are to know, love and serve the Lord."

- So, the head is our intellect, the way we know about the Lord.
- Our heart is the image of our love of the Lord
- And our hands are the image of serving the Lord, our actions, of getting things done for the Lord.

Two weeks ago several of us attended a seminar by Fr. Ron Rolheiser and he addressed how we can and should serve the Lord.

We all know that serving the Lord goes hand in hand with serving our neighbors, what we call "charity".

Fr. Rolheiser reminded us about that ... but that God wants us to go even further.

We should also bring justice to the world:

- so that we end ethnic and political hatred,
- so that we end gross wealth and health inequities
- so that all people can have a decent and safe life.

And then, we are challenged us even further.

Yes, charity and justice for our neighbor are good.

But we are also called to prophecy, where we speak up instead of simply letting the lack of justice continue on and on.

So, God's genius has brought our brother Jesus to show us how to live.

God's genius has brought us the Eucharist to charge up our relationships with the Lord.

Now, **are we willing to step up** to the challenges that face us and our neighbors,

- our neighbors down the street,
- our neighbors in the city,
- our neighbors in Michigan,
- our neighbors in the USA, and
- our neighbors around the world?

Well, maybe we are in for a very deep discussion with the Lord today ... maybe especially after we receive the Lord in Communion!