

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Theme: "DO NOT WORK FOR FOOD THAT PERISHES BUT FOR THE FOOD THAT ENDURES FOR ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH THE SON OF MAN WILL GIVE YOU"- JOHN 6:27

In the last week's Gospel reading, St. John told us Jesus fed over five thousand people with just five barley loaves of bread and two fish, and there were 12 baskets left over. No wonder St. John tells us they wanted to make him their king! In today's Gospel reading, they came to Jesus for him to feed them again. Jesus, being the Son of God and aware of their true reasons looking for him, said to them: "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled." Then he went on to advise them: "DO NOT WORK FOR FOOD THAT PERISHES BUT FOR THE FOOD THAT ENDURES FOR ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH THE SON OF MAN WILL GIVE YOU"- John 6:27. Simply put, they must not look for physical food (material/earthly thing) that perishes, rather food (spiritual thing) that gives eternal life. Jesus, the true "Bread of Life," is the only one who can give all of us eternal life.

Fellow parishioners, Jesus refused to honor their request. You see, Jesus did not follow what many businesspeople do, namely, give consumers what they want. This is called catering to consumers' tastes and pleasures. As you know, many producers/manufacturers manufacture what there is a demand for with the sole aim of meeting the needs of the market or the potential buyers' tastes. Jesus, the greatest spiritual teacher, knows very well that he did not come down to merely feed our physical hunger. He came down to give us food that would give us eternal life. It is said that if our hunger for love is satisfied, all forms of hunger will disappear. That's what Jesus came into this world to do. Jesus came down to nourish us with bread of Faith, Love, Hope, Peace, and Unity, which will eventually lead us to eternal life with him in heaven. All that we need to do to be nourished by Jesus, the Bread of Life, is for us to believe in him, the Son of God.

In order to have Jesus, the Bread of Life, we must also follow the advice of St. Paul in the second reading, namely, "We should put away the old self of your former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of mind, new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth." The old self, the earthly desires, are not in line with our baptismal calling and must be put to death. So, what deceitful desires are in you that must be put to death in order to live a new life in Christ?

In the first reading, you hear how sometimes human beings behave like ungrateful children who take their parents' love and care for granted. The ancient Jews forgot so soon the great things God had done for them through Moses. For instance, when they cried to God to liberate them from Egyptian slavery, God asked Moses to lead them to the Promised Land. Through God's grace and love for his people, Moses led them to cross the Sea of Reeds, destroyed the Egyptian army, and provided for their needs. Then when they encountered some challenges in the desert, they forgot the goodness of God and his servant Moses. They claimed they preferred servitude in Egypt to their freedom in their future home, the Promised Land.

Fellow parishioners, how many times have we also behaved like these ancient Israelites when we are faced with storms of life? We soon forget the goodness of God and complain and complain. In order to live a new life St. Paul talks about in the second reading, we must put to death our ungrateful attitudes in our life.

We are blessed always to receive Jesus, the Bread of Life in Word and Sacrament especially during our Eucharistic celebration. Let us always be very grateful for the gift of our Catholic faith and the most precious gift of Jesus Christ in our life.

May our Holy Mother Mary and her beloved husband St Joseph always intercede for us to have a strong yearning for Jesus Christ, the Bread of eternal Life. Amen!