



AMDG
18TH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME
5TH AUGUST 2018



Christ satisfies our hunger

OPENING PRAYER

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide,
you may restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored.

All four Gospels relate the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, which comes immediately before the passage we hear in today's *Gospel*, taken from St John. This text begins what is known as the 'Bread of Life Discourse' (John 6. 22–59), which we start today and will continue reading over the next two Sundays.

It is the morning after the night before, and the people go across the lake looking for Jesus – because, as he says, 'they have eaten all the bread they can eat'. Through dialogue, Jesus helps them to see that it is the Father who has always provided for them – a theme reinforced in the *First Reading* and *Psalm*.

Jesus also reveals something new to them: he himself is the sign they seek. Through his gift of living bread, he is offering them renewal of their minds and the ability to walk in the way of goodness and truth (*Second Reading*).

This week, let's give time for dialogue with the Lord that we, too, might respond to his desire to give himself totally to us, so that our deepest hunger and thirst may be satisfied.

SECOND READING EPHESIANS 4: 17.20–24

Iwant to urge you in the name of the Lord, not to go on living the aimless kind of life that pagans live. Now that is hardly the way you have learnt from Christ, unless you failed to hear him properly when you were taught what the truth is in Jesus. You must give up your old way of life; you must put aside your old self, which gets corrupted by following illusory desires. Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth.

I come to prayer, conscious that the Lord is present to me always.

I give attention to his Holy Spirit working in me, and also to how I am feeling at this moment.

Is there any conflict here?

It might help to name a particular grace I am seeking.

I read the text slowly – what touches me most in this passage?

Where am I drawn?

Perhaps I have a sense of the tension between the different ways of living as presented here ... aimless existence versus spiritual revolution; old ways versus new self; illusory desires as opposed to goodness and truth ...

Where do I place myself?

I look over my own life, asking to see it as the Lord sees it.

Do I want to share anything with the Lord?

I pause ...

St Paul urges us to give up our old way of life. If I were to take a look at my new self, created in God's way, how would it appear to me?

What, in my heart of hearts, do I truly desire?

Again, I pause to wait on the Lord ...

As I come to the end of my prayer, I ask for the grace to trust in the Lord who continually creates me in his way, and who calls me to trust ever more deeply in Christ, who is his sign.

Glory be ...

GOSPEL JOHN 6: 24–35 (part)

When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus. When they found him on the other side, they said to him, ‘... What must we do if we are to do the works that God wants?’ Jesus gave them this answer: ‘This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent.’ So they said, ‘What sign will you give to show us that we should believe in you? What work will you do? Our fathers had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’

Jesus answered:

‘I tell you most solemnly,
it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven,
it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven,
the true bread;
for the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.’

I quieten down and try to become still, better to allow the Word of God to enter my heart.

If it helps, I might like to begin this time of prayer by going with the people to look for Jesus. Who *is* this Jesus I am seeking?

And *why* do I seek him? I pause to ponder.

Perhaps I am going with a particular hunger or longing of my own.

Am I able to identify it?

I try to entrust my whole self to Jesus, who knows my hungers and thirsts, be they physical, spiritual, psychological ...

I return to the text. Perhaps I notice how Jesus wants to show the people that God has always provided for them throughout their history.

Where do I notice God’s goodness towards me?

For what can I be thankful ... today ... this week ... this year ...?

Just as Jesus feeds the crowds, I ponder the ways in which he feeds me.

As I bring my prayer to a close, I let the other people leave while I remain alone with the Lord.

I speak freely from the heart and listen attentively to him.

In conclusion, I take a moment to ask God to help *me* feed others through my own words and deeds. *Our Father* ...

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

He gave them bread from heaven.

Psalm

You can put on the new self that has been created in God's way.

Second Reading

This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent.

Gospel

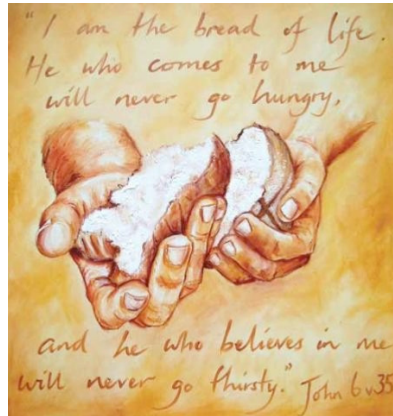
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry;
whoever believes in me will never thirst.

Gospel

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:

Exodus 16: 2-4.12-15; Psalm 77 (78); Ephesians 4: 17.20-24;

John 6: 24-35



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