

**First Reading**                    **Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15**

**A reading from the book of Exodus**

*I will rain bread from heaven upon you.*

The whole community of the sons of Israel began to complain against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness and said to them, 'Why did we not die at the Lord's hand in the land of Egypt, when we were able to sit down to pans of meat and could eat bread to our heart's content! As it is, you have brought us to this wilderness to starve this whole company to death!' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Now I will rain down bread for you from the heavens. Each day the people are to go out and gather the day's portion; I propose to test them in this way to see whether they will follow my law or not.'

'I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Say this to them, "Between the two evenings you shall eat meat, and in the morning, you shall have bread to your heart's content. Then you will learn that I, the Lord, am your God.'" And so it came about: quails flew up in the evening, and they covered the camp; in the morning there was a coating of dew all round the camp. When the coating of dew lifted, there on the surface of the desert was a thing delicate, powdery, as fine as hoarfrost on the ground. When they saw this, the sons of Israel said to one another, 'What is that?' not knowing what it was. 'That' said Moses to them 'is the bread the Lord gives you to eat.' The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**        **Ps 77:3-4, 23-25, 54**

**R.** The Lord gave them bread from heaven.

The things we have heard and understood,  
the things our fathers have told us,  
we will tell to the next generation:  
the glories of the Lord and his might. **R.**

He commanded the clouds above  
and opened the gates of heaven.  
He rained down manna for their food,  
and gave them bread from heaven. **R.**

Mere men ate the bread of angels.  
He sent them abundance of food.  
He brought them to his holy land,  
to the mountain which his right hand had won. **R.**

**Second Reading**                    **Ephesians 4:17, 20-24**

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians**

*Put on the new person that has been created in God's image.*

I want 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. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**        **Matthew 4:4**

Alleluia, alleluia! No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Alleluia!

**Gospel**                                    **John 6:24-35**

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

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

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, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered: 'I tell you most solemnly, you are not looking for me because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat. Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for food that endures to eternal life, the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you, for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal.'

Then 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 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.' 'Sir,' they said 'give us that bread always.' Jesus answered:

'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## 20210801: Reflection 18th Sunday

The people of God had to face two main challenges on their journey to the promised land: shortage of food and water.

Moses struck the rock with his staff and there came out plenty of water. (Ex. 17:6)

And God gave them food in the form of Manna when they grumbled against Moses. (Ex.16)

Last Sunday we saw Jesus feeding the hungry people with five loaves.

They followed Him wherever he went looking for more food.

Knowing their need for physical food, Jesus told them to hunger for spiritual food.

He asked them,

***'to work for food that gives eternal life rather than to work for food that perishes.'***

It is at that time they asked Jesus,

***'What must we do to get eternal life?'***

We hear similar questions from different kinds of people in the Bible.

When John the Baptist started his ministry, many people became his disciples and people like tax collectors and soldiers who came to hear him, asked,

***'What must we do?'*** (Lk 3:12-14)

People of different languages who heard the apostles preaching on the Pentecost day asked,

***'Brothers what must we do?'*** (Acts: 2:37)

Today we hear the same kind of question people asking Jesus. (John 6:28) And Jesus answered,

***'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst.'***

To believe in Jesus, they demanded a sign from Him as Moses gave Manna in the desert. Jesus corrected them by saying that it was not Moses but his heavenly Father who gave them Manna in the desert.

And he taught them that the spiritual food is more important than the physical food. And He asked them to work for that spiritual food without neglecting their daily duties to get their daily food.

***'In order to work for the bread of life'*** we must penetrate deeply into the Word of God and assimilate God's ways into our lives. The Eucharist we celebrate is the ***'real bread of life'*** and it is available to all who are in close contact with Jesus.

Therefore, my dear friends, as St. Paul told the Ephesians in today's second reading, let us change our lifestyle if needed, and live as Christ taught us. Also pray for those people who work only for the bread that perishes that they may believe in Jesus and be enriched by His life-giving Body and Blood.

Today's psalm reminds us about the glories of God's action. In our abundance, like the Jews, we should not forget God and the marvellous things He has done for us. It strongly reminds us that we should tell our children about God's love so that they might place their hope in God and never forget what God has done for us.

Let us pray that the clergy, the parents, and the teachers fulfill this grave responsibility to raise a God-fearing people and create solid families in our society.

Ask yourself,

***'Have I ever asked Jesus: Lord, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'***