

Sunday homily- 19B by Fr. Gabor

Before reading this homily read: John 6: 41-51.

Today again we here about the food that God gives us for our journey of life. Everyone's life journey starts in the place where we were conceived in our mother's womb and we are on our way to Heaven, to the house of our heavenly Father, as long as we walk the path of Jesus and remain walking on it. Since Heaven is a spiritual reality it is necessary that our journey becomes more and more a spiritual journey, guided by the Holy Spirit. Therefore just as we need physical food for our journey, we also need spiritual food, a food that has life in it, a food that encourages us to keep the good fight in times of fear and temptations. See for example Elijah in the first reading. He goes into the desert to die, because he is mentally exhausted and afraid of the threat of Jezebel who wants to kill him, but he Father sends angels to feed him and so he is able to continue his spiritual and physical journey as a prophet. ; a food that gives us the strength to go where we may not want to go, but the Lord Jesus wants us to go. Remember what He said to Peter: when you become old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will put a belt around your waste and take you where you don't want to go (cf. Jn 21:18).

The only food that is both physical and spiritual is the Word of God in the Bible, and the Eucharist itself. The Eucharist is obviously physical, because it is made of wheat flour and wine, but it is spiritual, because it has life in it; not just life in general, but life for our spiritual battles; the life of Jesus, as He says in our Gospel reading today: 'I am the living bread which has come down from heaven...and the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.'

Since this living bread contains the fullness of Christ, it also contains His heart that is filled with love and mercy, therefore this bread is the bread of love and mercy. Jesus says that he is the way to the Father, and 'Love is His way' as we sing in one of our songs. Love and mercy is the only way to the Father, not mere church practice, but love and mercy in action. St. Paul reminds us of this in the second reading when he says: 'be friends with one another, and kind, forgiving each other as readily as God forgave you in Christ... and follow Christ by loving as he loved...'

The late Pope St. John Paul II strongly emphasises in his book called 'The Theology of the Body' that we become what we eat. So when we eat the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ through the consecrated bread and wine we are called to become Christ's love and mercy. This is our true life; not the consumption of merely earthly food and enjoyment, but the practice of true love and mercy. So let's receive today the Eucharist with this in mind and commit ourselves to carrying out the acts of God's love and mercy for which you will see practical suggestions on these two posters in the Church. This is the answer to that often asked question: what does God want me to do? Don't think the answer is complicated. It is as simple as it says on these two posters on the wall.