

20th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - AUGUST 19, 2018

SUNDAY'S READINGS - EXCERPTS TO PLACE IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

First Reading:

"Let whoever is simple turn in here;  
to the one who lacks understanding, she says,  
Come, eat of my food." (Prv 9:4-5a)

Psalm:

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord. (Ps 34)

Second Reading:

Therefore, do not continue in ignorance,  
but try to understand what is the will of the Lord. (Eph 5:17)

Gospel:

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood  
has eternal life,  
and I will raise him on the last day." (Jn: 6:54)

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WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES - ENGAGE PARISHIONERS IN DAILY MASS AND PRAYER

Readings for the Week of August 19, 2018

Sunday: Prv 9:1-6/Ps 34:2-3, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 [9a]/Eph 5:15-20/Jn 6:51-58

Monday: Ez 24:15-24/Dt 32:18-19, 20, 21 [cf. 18a]/Mt 19:16-22

Tuesday: Ez 28:1-10/Dt 32:26-27ab, 27cd-28, 30, 35cd-36ab [39c]/Mt 19:23-30

Wednesday: Ez 34:1-11/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [1]/Mt 20:1-16

Thursday: Ez 36:23-28/Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19 [Ez 36:25]/Mt 22:1-14

Friday: Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 [12]/Jn 1:45-51

Saturday: Ez 43:1-7ab/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [cf. 10b]/Mt 23:1-12

Next Sunday: Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b/Ps 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23 [9a]/

Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32/Jn 6:60-69

Observances for the Week of August 19, 2018

Sunday: 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Monday: St. Bernard, Abbot & Doctor of the Church

Tuesday: St. Pius X, Pope

Wednesday: The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Thursday: St. Rose of Lima, Virgin

Friday: St. Bartholomew, Apostle

Saturday: St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest

Next Sunday: 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

August 19, 2018 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

In this Sunday's Gospel, the conflict escalates in the Bread of Life Discourse. Confusion is mounting in the crowd. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Their minds were thinking literally, not mystically. Jesus doesn't seem to help, however, and only drives his point home with more emphasis. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." Jesus would later institute the Eucharist at the Last Supper. There he would definitively establish the sacramental reality in which bread and wine become substantially his own Body and Blood. We celebrate this sacrament in the Mass.

Perhaps we do not always understand what we receive. "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink." What is the essence of food and drink? Food nourishes our bodies, providing essential calories for our survival. Water is used throughout the body to cushion joints, regulate body temperature, and protect sensitive tissues like the brain. When we receive the Eucharist, we receive the spiritual equivalent of these essential elements. Like water, the Eucharist strengthens the sanctifying grace moving through us. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him." The Eucharist connects us intimately to Jesus and confirms our union with him. That is why we abstain from the Eucharist while in a state of mortal sin. It would be a contradiction and deep disrespect to these words of Jesus. To receive the Body and Blood of Jesus is not a right but a gift we receive with deep humility. As we receive the Bread of Life, grace strengthens our love, separates us from sin -- even wiping away venial sins -- unifies us with the universal Church, and helps commit us to humble service. Together we are nourished for our mission in the world!

#### LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

"Show me what is physically different between a host that is consecrated and one that is not." These are words that can be heard on the lips of anyone struggling with faith. Perhaps, they are heard on yours. Physical tests will reveal no difference. The difference is seen through faith. In one sense, it is simple. Either we believe that the risen Christ is present -- soul and divinity -- or we do not. The fruits of faith are the proof. In the Eucharist, God enters into the very depths of who we are. However, it is our choice whether we ignore what He does or act fully upon it. The Eucharist can change us. When people see that we are different, they in turn will themselves believe.

#### EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

We can easily feel obligated to attend a party, wedding, or other event that we find ourselves invited to as a guest. If we want to go, then we get dressed up and rush off with anticipation of fun and good times with friends. If we dread going, we get ourselves together slowly and arrive late, hoping that the event will not be so long and we can then get on with the rest of our day. The difference in our feelings may have to do with many aspects: the host, the attendees, the reason for celebration, or even the venue. Either way, the invitation has been given to us because someone feels that our presence would make a positive difference. Our response is entirely our own. We decide how we will answer the invitation.

Every Sunday, every day in fact, you and I have received an invitation to a banquet more celebratory and grander than any wedding or birthday party. The host is actually Jesus Christ himself, and he has prepared a feast that promises to satisfy. He has prepared for this event by giving all he has to give. No host has ever been more gracious. His hope is that you will be happy to attend for your presence does make a tremendous difference. Would he invite you if attending made no difference at all? Will you RSVP with a sense of joy and anticipation? If this is just another invite that obligates you and you approach the event with indifference, the host wonders if you really comprehend what he went through to make this meal possible. He also wonders if you really understand what is truly being celebrated.

--Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

#### QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - INVITE PARISHIONERS TO REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE

##### First Reading

The Jewish sage of Proverbs uses domestic images to invite believers to participate in divine wisdom. What do you find attractive about obtaining wisdom?

##### Second Reading

Paul defines wisdom to the Ephesians as understanding "what is the will of the Lord." What do you understand as the will of the Lord?

##### Gospel Reading

The Bread of Life Discourse reaches its zenith in Jesus saying, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." How is this assertion central to our Catholic belief in the Eucharist?

#### CATHOLIC QUOTES - WORDS TO INSPIRE THE FAITHFUL

Of all his virtues, Christ specifically commends one to us, humility. 'Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart.'

--St. Bernard of Clairvaux

#### WHY DO WE DO THAT? - CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

##### Question:

Why do we have a feast for the Queenship of Mary?

Answer: For many of us, the language of kings and queens may seem like they belong to history or a medieval movie. Royalty have absolute authority over a kingdom and their subjects, a concept that is foreign to many of us today. While Jesus doesn't rule a political kingdom, we honor and recognize him as the King of Kings, Lord of Heaven and Earth. To God alone belongs absolute authority over all of existence.

We may think of queens as the spouse of the king, but there is another key relationship: the king's mother. In Biblical history, we see instances where the mother of the king is given due as a queen herself, complete with a throne! Mary's guiding influence over her Son is seen most notably in the Wedding Feast at Cana. Mary is not Queen on her own merit. She is "full of grace" and "blessed" in "all ages" because of the reign of her Son.