

Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - Corpus Christi

A resource for personal, family
and community prayer.



“I am the living bread...”

Gospel: John 6:51-58

⁵¹Jesus said to the Jews: “I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.”

⁵²Then the Jews started arguing with one another: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” they said.

⁵³Jesus replied: “I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you.

⁵⁴Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise them up on the last day.

You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.



⁵⁵For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

⁵⁶Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in them.

⁵⁷As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me.

⁵⁸This is the bread come down from heaven, not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live forever.”

For more information check out <https://lectio.newrydominican.com> which includes this week's Sunday Gospel podcast Living the Word - Meditate on the Way, Pentecost Series.

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Reading

The feast of Corpus Christi, the body and blood of Christ, celebrates the real presence of the self-giving and self-sacrificing love of Jesus, given to us in the Eucharist. Jesus gives of himself to others- body, mind, soul and spirit as living bread. In other words, he gives of himself totally, every part of his being; he puts his whole self at the service of others so that they might have life. In that sense, his flesh is “real food and his blood is real drink.” In eating and drinking his “flesh and blood” he continues to live in his disciples and his disciples live in him and draw life and strength from him.

In our meditation we remember deep human experiences of such self-giving and self-sacrificing love and how this gave life to all who were open to receive it. Such love is a real taste of the love we encounter in the Eucharist- the Body and Blood of Christ.

Recognising

You are invited to meditate on the passage, or any part of it, by letting it speak to your life experience until you feel to say “I recognise this passage.”

v55. “my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink”

Can you remember an experience of someone giving of themselves totally in love in the service of another person or a community or in the pursuit of a noble cause?

v56. “whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in that person.”

Can you remember a deep, loving, faithful relationship with a parent or spouse or friend where there was a mutual indwelling in each other’s heart?



v57. “Whoever eats me will draw life from me.”

Can you remember someone who has shared with you something of their own “flesh and blood” - fragility, wounds or vulnerability? In doing so, they were a great source of strength and courage for you in coping with your own struggles.

v58. “The bread which comes down from heaven....whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

Can you remember a time when you were searching in different places for meaning in life until one day you discovered that the true source of fulfillment is to be found in love-self-giving love, faithful love?

v54. “And I shall raise him up on the last day.”

Can you remember somebody who always seems to have the capacity to raise your spirits and lift your heart no matter how low you feel or how difficult the moment?

Responding

Having recognised God's presence in life, you are invited to **respond** in your own words, in prayer (thanksgiving, repentance and petition).

Heavenly Father, I thank you for those who have served me selflessly, who have given me their "flesh to eat and blood to drink" and, in doing so, have given me life – self-confidence, generosity of heart, inspiration and courage. Their love has helped to make me the person I am today. Because I have "eaten of their flesh" and "drunk their blood" they are part of me and always will be.

I ask forgiveness for the times when I have been calculating and measuring in giving of myself in relationship, reluctant to "give of my flesh to eat and my blood to drink" for fear that it would not be reciprocated.

Father, continue to nourish us with your "flesh and blood" so that, more and more, we might become a 'eucharistic people' – self-giving and self-sacrificing in our service of others. Help us to recognize and to experience that, in giving ourselves away in love as "living bread", we enter into deep communion with you and with each other and "live forever" in your presence.

Resting

You are invited to enter deep prayer by simply **resting** your heart in God's presence (Contemplative moment). The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage might help you on this journey into greater silence and stillness, e.g. "Living Bread."



Giving and receiving selfless love is the most satisfying food for the human heart.

Reflecting

From your journey with this passage, you are now invited to **reflect**, and put into your own words, any new insights or understanding that you have received (Wisdom moment).

From your journey with this passage, what new insight has been given to you into the meaning of... communion or self-giving love or friendship or sacrifice or commitment?

Giving and receiving selfless love is the most satisfying food for the human heart.



Children

Reading

Jesus shares that he is the living bread that has come from heaven. Jesus makes clear that anyone who eats this bread in Holy Communion will live forever as it is his flesh which he gives for the life of the world. Jesus reminds the Jews that eating his flesh will fill them with life.

Recognising

Can you remember a 'Jesus person', maybe a parent, grandparent, teacher or friend, who gives of themselves to help you to be happy and to fill you with life, faith, hope and love?

Can you remember a time when you shared something of yourself, your own flesh and blood, to feed another person with encouraging words and loving actions, and this filled them with life?

Responding

Father, I thank You for the people in my life, especially my parents, grandparents, teachers and friends who have given some-

thing of themselves to help me experience happiness and joy.

Father, I am sorry for the times that I have taken the gift of people's presence and their efforts for granted, and I have been slow to give thanks.

Father, I ask that my eyes and heart may be opened to recognise when I can generously give of myself to make a positive difference to the lives of those who mean so much to me.

Resting

Rest in the generous embrace of the Father by repeating "LIVING BREAD" for as long as it is possible. May your heart be filled with the food of life as you are drawn deeper into the Father's presence.

Reflecting

Offering the great gift of yourself will fill others with love and life.

A simple summary of Lectio steps can be found in the porch of the church.