

Reflection Questions

- Would you describe your relationship with God as something you have to go looking for or something that you remain in?
 - Reflect upon this and consider times when each has been true.

- Do you believe that Jesus Christ remains present to us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

- With what type of spiritual food are you feeding your soul?

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time



We put a lot of emphasis on our quest for God, discussing how and why we ought to find Him. However, we do not need to resort to detective work to find closeness with the Father. God is generously eager to offer what He has to the world, and in our recovery from addiction and other unhealthy attachments we are given an invitation to simply *remain* in Him.

We have to turn away from our earthly food supply if we are to feast on God's banquet. Many of us spend our lives going from trough to trough trying to fill up on food that spoils—power, pleasure, honor, and wealth. In Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God made flesh, we are invited to taste the Bread of Life. In this week's gospel reading (Jn 6:51-58), we hear Jesus share:

*For my flesh is true food,
and my blood is true drink.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in him.*

We take this literally and directly, supported by the fact that Jesus doubles-down on this statement when given a chance to soften the message to a grumbling crowd. As we make a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God in recovery (step 3), we can find no better way to be in alignment with our Lord than by remaining in Him and receiving Him in the Eucharist.

Further along the twelve steps, we lean on our Lord through prayer, meditation, and conscious contact with Him to discern His will for us and for the power to carry it out (step 11). Belief in the mystery of God's presence in the Eucharist opens us up to true union with Him, providing clarity and nourishment for the recovery journey that continues.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe, the patron saint of drug addicts and families, whose feast day is celebrated this week (Tuesday, August 14), speaks to Christ about the wonders of the Blessed Sacrament: "You come to me and unite Yourself intimately to me under the form of nourishment. Your Blood now runs in mine, Your Soul, Incarnate God, compenetrates mine, giving courage and support. What miracles! Who would have ever imagined such!" He is also credited for noting, "If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion."

This week's second reading describes the gratitude that accompanies the sacramental life and discerning the will of God (Eph 5:15-20):

*Therefore, do not continue in ignorance, but try to understand what is the will of the Lord.
And do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.*

Saint Paul's words to the Ephesians are also instructive of the behavior change necessary as we make spiritual progress through recovery. These words ring true whether your addiction is to getting drunk on wine, trying to control a drunk, compulsive overeating, drug use, unhealthy sexual attachments, or general fear, anxiety, and shame that can be deemed debaucherous.

Our common solution is found in the Body of our King that gave us eternal life by sacrificing his own. Let us be filled with the Holy Spirit and enlightened by God's divine nourishment. We remain in Christ with gratitude and hope.