

Beloved in Christ, today's Gospel ends Jesus Christ's discourse on the **Bread of Life**. Jesus is making an absolute statement that he cannot substitute **truth** with anything, or **truth should not be compromised** with anything. If we want to live forever, then we must eat his body and drink his blood. He fed the 5,000 with earthly food, but a far greater gift is the spiritual food that God provides for us, which is no other than Christ himself. Jesus is offering himself to us either we make Christ our spiritual food or we go hungry and die. For he says ... unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life within you (Jn.6:53). Many of Jesus' disciples who were listening said, this saying is hard; who can accept it? As a result of this, many of his disciples **returned to their former way of life** and no longer accompanied him (Jn.6:66). They loved hearing the words of the Lord Jesus and they loved experiencing the warmth of His Presence. They had just eaten bread He multiplied. They had seen him healing people. They had heard about God's Kingdom. What was even better, they had heard Him call them to be leaders in His Kingdom. But now Jesus had given them a teaching that demanded their **absolute trust** in Him, their **absolute faith** in Him.

The Twelve might have told Jesus what was happening. Perhaps they were expecting Jesus to tone down his teaching. Maybe they were just pointing out that the Lord was losing followers. The fact is that Jesus was not going to retract a word. He came to bring the divine reality to the world that was beyond the capacity of man to understand. He came to bring the Gifts of God that were far greater than man's comprehension. He would not compromise the truth. "Will you also go, Peter?" he asks the leader of his Twelve. "Lord, where can we go; you alone have the words of eternal life." Peter spoke on behalf of the Apostles, their hope and faith is in Christ. He did not know with his senses how it is possible for Jesus to give His Body and Blood for the food they would need for the journey to God. Peter did not know with his senses, but he knew with his heart that all was beautiful with Jesus and that it would be infinitely better to trust in the Lord. Jesus said in today's gospel, "It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is to no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life."

We are called to believe in the Lord, to trust in Him. We are called to stay with the Lord in faith rather than to trust in our own ability. We are called to give an infinitely greater credence to the spiritual we cannot see over the material we can see. Surely, we are tempted to trust only our senses, or we are tempted to stand on the material. We are tempted to limit ourselves to the here and now. Although, we are human, we are also spiritual. Deep within every single one of us there is the Voice of Faith prodding us to exclaim with Peter, "I will not leave you Lord. You alone have the words of eternal life."

I want us to develop seven new approaches to Holy Communion: first, **Jesus is alive**. We receive a living not the dead Jesus. As Jesus himself affirms that, I am the living bread that came down from heaven... (Jn.6:51). Hence, we have to believe the real presence of Christ and receive the sacrament with devotion. Two, **Jesus doesn't come to us alone** but, with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Again, he comes to us with the angels and saints CCC.1377. Three, **there is only One Mass**, though, there are about hundreds or thousands of Masses every hour in each day. The fact is that Jesus Christ is the main celebrant in each Mass. The priest acts in the person of Christ. The Mass is a sacrifice, the re-presentation or re-living in an unbloody manner of Christ's Death on Good Friday and of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Four, **Holy Communion is not just one miracle**, but an awesome and supernatural gift from God to man. Five, **we don't only receive communion, but enter into communion with Christ** so that he can transform us.... Six, **every communion is different; and therefore, we must approach him with devotion, reverence and desire** for Christ our love. Finally, there is no limit of how we can receive Holy Communion; we can receive Christ both physically as well as spiritually.

Finally, my dear brothers and sisters, let us make a solemn promise today like Joshua, as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord (Jos.24:15). Or like Peter, we can also say Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God (Jn.6:69). May God deepen our understanding and faith so that we can receive Holy Communion with faith, conviction and devotion. Amen!