



## OUR LENT REFLECTIONS 2021 (2) Text: John 6:16-40

### ***"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)***

Jesus presents himself as the universal food that we all need to sustain our daily lives. He is perfectly aware that we eat every day, sometimes more than once, so that we have the energy we need to tackle the activities of the day and also that we may be physically nourished. That is why he offers himself as basic or staple food that each individual should have so that they may have a normal life. Examples of basic food for communities throughout the world include: cereals such as rice, wheat, maize, millet, teff and sorghum, starchy tubers or root vegetables such as potatoes, cassava, sweet potatoes, yams, or taro, bananas, meat, fish, eggs, milk, and cheese, and dried legumes such as lentils and other beans. It would be quite obvious that Jesus was used to bread made from barley or wheat, a staple enjoyed by his people. Participants at the parish group Lent reflection meeting recently felt that Jesus also meant all other staple foods.

The food we eat regardless of the amount can only satisfy us for that day or for a few hours but on the contrary Jesus is the bread that gives us eternal satisfaction. We live in a world where many of its inhabitants especially in least developed countries struggle to secure basic food. Would the statement by Jesus make good sense to the hungry communities in the villages he toured and, in the famine, stricken areas of our modern world? Jesus meant something else. He was a different form of staple food to satisfy the spiritual needs of his audience then and today. Recipients of his life will not hunger any more. They need not to draw satisfaction from the perishable things of this world. Jesus is our provider: "From now on, Lord give us this bread!" Participants noted that the food we eat is gathered and sourced from here and there, but God is the ultimate source. All food comes from our Father in heaven. We may most often than not be tempted to think that what we have on our tables is as a result of our efforts or the working of others we look up to but Christ reminds us that everything we have comes from God. The psalmist beautifully puts it in this way:

*"They all depend on you  
to give them food as they need it.  
When you supply it, they gather it.  
You open your hand to feed them,  
and they are richly satisfied.  
But if you turn away from them, they panic.  
When you take away their breath,  
they die and turn again to dust.  
When you give them your breath, life is created,  
and you renew the face of the earth."*

*(Psalm 104:27-30)*



“Lord, feed us and sustain us with your bread that endures to eternity.”

### ***Keeping our testimonies***

“I have told you, you have seen but do you believe.” Participants noted that as human beings and more so as Christians we should always remember the good that the Lord is doing for us and others because those testimonies build our faith. As days go by, we may find ourselves confronted by new needs and we end up forgetting that the same Lord who was with us before, is still with us today and in the future. Often times we are tempted to question God ability to care for our needs. Is God aware of these things? Is he still in control? The signs and miracles God has done before are meant to give us assurance that he is still there with us and he is able to do that even now.

### ***Why do you come to Jesus Christ?***

This is a very crucial question to be answered by those who follow Christ. Is it because we have eaten the bread of this world and have had our fill or it is because we love him? As we relentlessly follow him and seek him our motives which are known to our hearts and to God, are quite important. Participants from the parish group also noted that God knows our needs and he weighs them. God knows the true motives behind for our desire to be around him. We always have ulterior motives and totally disconnected from the desire to seek to honour God with our lives. This is something we prayerfully have to examine ourselves on as we grow in Christ.

*What is our motive of following Christ?*

*How do we reflect this in the quality of service we render to him?*

*How do we reflect this in the allocation of our time and resources to God and others?*

### ***“It is I, do not be afraid”***

During the session, participants also observed that the world around us is full of storms that we have no control over. Some storms such as the global pandemic Covid-19 that we are currently facing, is a great giant. Others storms are small and only affect a few individuals including ordinary sickness or death. Corona virus has disturbed the normal routines of live and livelihoods. Jobs are insecure, health is threatened, the future looks gloomy if not dark. As the disciples of Christ today, we are all vulnerable. In times like this we have to believe in Christ and trust in him. He is the faithful Keeper of our souls and the one who can either calm the storm or see us through it. Therefore, as his disciples we are called to hope in all things and believe in him all the time. As long as we are in his hands, and as we look up to God we have every reason to HOPE. We have to face the storms of life with courage and ultimate trust in God the Almighty.

### **Prayer**



# LENT

*Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen***