

Homily Notes

July 1, 2018: XIII Sunday of the Year

Peter's Pence Sunday

Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24; 2 Cor 8:7,9,13-15; Mk 5:21-43.

Hope (the last tool)

Today's liturgy of the word clearly shows that our Loving God is a gracious generous giver. In the gospel reading we can see the humble touch with deep faith of a woman—suffering from haemorrhages—to her healer. Woman is suffering from physical illness (haemorrhages), social illness (rejection and cannot approach Jesus directly) and psychological suppression (Mk 5:26). Now all that she has after spending everything is little hope. Hope is almost extinguishing. Last attempt is to get healed by divine healer. Her hope moves her to touch the fringe of Jesus' cloth. That humble touch with deep faith made her to experience the complete healing.

In the second part of the gospel we see the divine touch—with power and authority—of Jesus gives life to a little girl. Here we the subject is completely nil of faith and hope, at that moment others can always lit the hope of the subject through theirs. By the powerful request of Jairus, the hope and faith of a little girl is made to shine again.

All these 'gracious acts of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1Cor 8:9a) should remind us each and every moment of our existence that 'God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living' (Wis 1:13).

Now the final question is do I have hope shining in me? Am I sharing the hope for someone else? May the shining Hope of every one—Jesus Christ—give us the grace to be hopeful in all the situations of lives.

Joseph Madalai Muthu

**July 8, 2018: XIV Sunday of the Year
Ezek 2:2-5; 2Cor 12: 7-10; Mark 6:1-6**

From Slavery to Freedom

The most severe critics are often people very familiar to us, a member of our family, a relative, or neighbor we rub shoulders with on a regular basis. Jesus faced a severe testing when he returned to his home town, not simply as the carpenter's son, but now as a rabbi with disciples. It would have been customary for Jesus to go to the synagogue each week during the Sabbath, and when his turn came, to read from the scriptures during the Sabbath service. His hometown folks listened with spellbound attention on this occasion because they had heard about the miracles he had performed in other towns. What sign would he do in his hometown? Jesus startled them with a seeming rebuke that no prophet or servant of God can receive honor among his own people. The people of Nazareth took offense at him and refused to listen to what he had to say. They despised his preaching because he was a workingman, a carpenter, a mere layman and they despised him because of his family. Jesus could do no mighty works in their midst because they were closed and disbelieving towards him. If people have come together to hate and to refuse to understand, then they will see no other point of view than their own and they will refuse to love and accept others. Do you easily take offense at others?

Jesus came to set people free from the worst tyranny possible, such as the tyranny of slavery to sin and the fear of death,

and the destruction of both body and soul. God's power alone can save us from emptiness and poverty of spirit, from confusion and error, and from the fear of death and hopelessness. The gospel of salvation is "good news" for us today. Let us try to hear and practice the word of God.

Pious George Koonan

July 15, 2018: XV Sunday of the Year

Amos 7: 12-15; Eph 1: 3-14; Mk 6: 7-13

Walking with the Lord; Standing for Justice;

Detachment from the world

St. Francis of Assisi, born in a rich family, heard God's call, gave up everything and went house to house begging and preaching the word of God. Mother Theresa of Calcutta, had a call within a call. She gave up everything and stood for Justice, Truth and Christ. Dear friends. today's readings remind us and speak about the characteristics of a missionary and the principles of discipleship.

The first reading from the Book of Prophet Amos portrays a tussle between Prophet Amos who belongs to southern kingdom and the Priest Amaziah who belongs to the northern kingdom. Here we see a difference between Prophet, Pilgrim, Missionary, on the one hand, and Manager, Priest and Pastor, on the other hand. Amos being a prophet, missionary, pilgrim is always led by the power of the Holy Spirit. But the other, Amaziah, who is a priest, pastor and manager succumbed to the hierarchy and spoke in favour of them.

Today's first reading reminds us to be like prophet Amos who stood for justice, truth and who bravely spoke against injustice done by the king of Amaziah. This also reminds us, how God chooses the weak for his work as he chose Amos who was a herdsman and dresser of sycamore trees.

Today's Gospel speaks about the missionary work of the disciples. Jesus instructs them not to carry anything with them: by saying this Jesus reminds them to be detached from the world and to stay away from all worldly pleasures.

Jesus asked them to carry a staff, which reminds them to be like shepherds for the people and sandals which reminds them to be like protectors from all kinds of evil and wicked snares .

In today's reading, Jesus specially gives authority to disciples: for instituting the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Friends, as Yahweh selected poor Amos, Jesus selected the 12 disciples who are weak; and he made them strong. As they stood for justice and Truth we are reminded to stand for justice and truth.

As St. Paul, in his letter to Ephesians thanked, for all the gifts received from Christ and Holy Spirit. We need to use these gifts to become the mouth piece of God like Amos and the 12 Disciples.

As Jesuit novices and pilgrims go on foot begging, witnessing to Christ during a pilgrimage, so also Sadhu Sunder Singh, went from home to home, begging and preaching word of God. As Peter and Paul said in Acts 4: 20: For We Cannot Stop Speaking about What We Have Seen and Heard. We are all invited to become vigilant prophets.

Finally, the situation of today challenges each and every one to be a Prophet, Pilgrim, and Missionary in proclaiming Christ vigorously as Archbishop Thomas Macwan and Archbishop Anil Couto who stood for truth, justice and became a mouth piece of God. Let us ask God in this Eucharistic Celebration to make us Prophet, Pilgrim and Missionary.

Bro. Marianand-2nd B.Th.

July 22, 2018: XVI Sunday of the Year
Jer 23:1-6; Eph 2:13-18; Mk 6: 30-34.

Pray, Serve, and Give All Glory to God

Once when St. Mother Theresa was asked from where she got the courage, strength and inspiration to serve the poor and bandage their wounds, she replied that the source of her strength was from the Eucharistic Lord.

Today in the Gospel reading we see the enthusiasm and excitement of the apostles to share with Jesus, their master about what they had been able to do when they were sent out on a mission. They were very glad to inform him that they were able to cast out demons and cure the sick. On the contrary, we see Jesus trying to teach his apostles to be more humble and give all glory to God by asking them to move to a deserted place where they could rest a while and spent time in silence to thank the Lord for the gifts bestowed upon them. He himself even sets an example to be a good shepherd who is ready to lay down his life for his flock and be compassionate towards them when he recognized the people who came to him in large crowds as sheep wandering without a shepherd.

Let us look inwardly and ask ourselves, “Do we give all glory to God alone or still remain in the state of pride through our daily activities? Are we able to serve others unceasingly and unconditionally adapting ourselves to cater the needs of others?

May God bless us and give us the strength to be the good shepherds for his flock and become true disciples of Christ witnessing him in our lives.

Shebin C.S

July 29, 2018: XVII Sunday of the Year
2-Kings 4:42-44, Eph 4:1-6; Jn 6:1-15

God Becomes Food For Humans

No man is an island is the famous quote which describes the nature and purposes of human. He is a social being. Today's liturgy of the word show the important aspect of a social being that is sharing with care and love. Jesus compassion moves him to do the miracle of multiplication of the loaves.

By this miracle Jesus is promising the providential care of the Father and His compassionate care to humankind. This multiplication act is indeed the Eucharist gesture. Not only 2000 years ago Jesus "took the loaves and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated" (Jn. 6; 11), but even now in the each Eucharist celebration, Jesus does the same act of multiplication. This miracle of feeding the five thousand was really a pre experience of the Eucharist instituted at the last supper. Through this feeding with the ordinary bread, Jesus gives the fore taste of the feeding with His own body and blood. Jesus asserts that He can self-empty Himself to the level of a small piece of bread to give life and life in abundance to us. The asking of bread from the people shows that God invites the human beings to participate in the salvific work continued through the church with the grace of the Holy Spirit. No one asked Jesus to give food but, Jesus understands the pain and the need of the people and does the needful. This encourages us to live with hope and complete trust on God.

"But, strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well". (Mt.6:33). Jesus, the Immanuel is with us always in the form of Eucharist, journeying with us giving strength. Do we value and recognise His presence?

August 5, 2018: XVIII Sunday of the Year
Ex. 16:2-4,12-15; Eph: 4:17,20-24; Jn. 6: 24-35.

To Become the Bread of Life

I am the bread of life, He who comes to me will not hunger,
He who believes in me shall not thirst (Jn. 6: 35).

There was a drunkard who had a family. His wife and kids were suffering from his drinking habits. He used to spend all the money on drinks and friends. One day his wife happened to take him for a retreat from then he was a changed person. He came to know more about Jesus life and gave up his drinks. Later few months, while walking on a busy road, he met his old drinking companion. He said to him, why he is not coming at usual drinking joints? The man replied, I have met Jesus and I believe in him. I stopped drinking. So his companion laughed at him and said Oh! You have started believing Jesus and all that crap- I remember that he changed water into wine at Cana. Then humorously the man replied, I have not seen Jesus changing water into wine but, he changed beer and liquor in my life into bread and clothing to my kids and wife.

By pondering on today's gospel reading, let us ask ourselves, why does Jesus preach? Why does he perform his works – miracles –signs? Why does he feed the five thousand? Yes, these works are expressions of his compassion. But his intention is not merely to solve problems. In fact, he didn't manage to solve all the problems of the human condition. He also declares, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me shall not hunger. And he who believes in me shall never thirst." He even refuses to offer food when people ask for it, as in the gospel narrative of today. He tells them rather bluntly: "You are not looking for me because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat" (Jn. 6:26).

Jesus' works have one sole end: that we might build an intimate relationship with him and in so doing become one with the Father. It is this intimacy that is captured in the symbol of bread. Bread basically does three functions to life: Bread nourishes human life. It makes us to work and play, sing and dance. It's the crucial ingredient of life. Secondly, Bread manifests life. Thirdly, it also perpetuates life. And all these functions of bread are appropriated to Jesus. It is this depth of relationship that is powerfully expressed in the Eucharist. What I eat becomes part of me. This is "the kind of food that endures to eternal life, the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you" (Jn. 6:27). And I conclude again by quote; "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst" (Jn. 6:35). It is He whom we seek. As we will offer body and blood of Jesus on the sacred altar, Let us ask his Grace upon each one of us. Amen.

Roger Lenny Fernandes

August 12, 2018: Prison Ministry Sunday
1Kings19:4-8; Eph 4:30-5:2; John: 6:41-51

Hope in Jesus, the Saviour

Dear friends in Christ Jesus, in today's reading Jesus is inviting us to have a focus on Jesus who continues to bring us towards himself. Hence, all the readings are very much related to each other and that leads us to Christ who is the bread of life. It is journey to perfection. Whenever we go long journey, we have to think about all the things we need to hold with. May be on the time journey we could think of that what kind of things should we take with us? In the same way Elijah should have done the same. When he went on his long journey to Horeb. Elijah was a prophet, he was called to give God's word to his people at a time when they had turned their backs on God, and so he wasn't always very popular.

God who is full of mercy and compassion will never leave us without food. We much have the heart of gratitude towards God. Whereby, we remained in today's gospel. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." Dear friends, we much ask ourselves, that how does Jesus show himself as bread to us in this service? However, we believe that, the Eucharist is the way Jesus shows us that he is 'the bread of life that came down from heaven, whoever eats this bread will have eternal life.'

Humanly speaking, every time we eat we are reminded that we never alone, no matter how big or long our journey is. Every time we are reminded that God loves and cares for us.

Dear friends, Jesus promises us today that he is the bread we need, not just to keep us going for a journey like Elijah's, but to keep us going in our journey through our whole lives, forever. Jesus is the food we need for the true life that God has for us.

Let's pray and trust in the bread of life that God has prepared for our spiritual nourishment. God is the center of our whole being. We need to deepen our faith as true Disciples of Christ. Hence, then we are able to project ourselves as an authentic spiritual person for his people by braking ourselves to His people.

August 19, 2018: Justice Sunday
Prov. 9:1-6; Eph 5:15-20; Jn. 6:51-58.

God Becoming Bread

Today's readings point to the idea of God becoming bread to give life to the humans. God who took the form of a human being in Jesus divides His body and shares His blood so that we may have life and life in abundance.

The Gospel episode from Jn. 51-58 reveals the mystery of the holy qurbana and the fruits of receiving Jesus' body and

blood. We participate in Holy Mass for many years. How many of us have really understood the mystery of Qurbana? How many of us really experience the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and live in that experience in our everyday lives?

When Jesus spoke about giving his body as the life giving bread, the Jewish people also could not understand it. But Jesus revealed those after the two miracles – the feeding the five thousand and walking on the waters. Through this, he revealed that he has control over the nature and matter. It reveals that Jesus has the power to transform His body into the form of a bread.

The evil powers know the real presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Many of us, the so called traditional Christians are still sceptics towards it. Our lord Jesus Christ took all the suffering and humiliation to become the bread of life.

The world may lead our spirit into a liberation. We can be living dead bodies in which there is no love towards God and the other, and spirit lies inactive. By self-emptying Jesus becomes bread to give new life, an everlasting life. Why we hesitate to receive this life? Do we like to live with a dead humanness without love, concern, compassion for the suffering?

August 26, 2018: XXI Sunday of the Year
Joshua 24: 1-2A,15-17,18B; Eph 5:21-32; Jn 6: 60-69

Why No Response to Eternal Word?

“Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.”
(Jn 6:68)

In today’s reading, we see this response made by Peter when Jesus asked his apostles whether they are also deserting

him after many of his disciples turned their back and stopped following him. When Jesus says that he is the living bread that came from heaven and whoever eats of this bread will live forever; the bread that he will give for the life of the world is his own flesh, the Jews who followed him as his disciples in large crowd could not digest what he was teaching. So they went away from the Lord who spoke to them the words of eternal life.

During some moments in life, haven't we come across such situations where we feel depressed, tensed and the difficulty to digest God's plan in our lives? Most often we feel and ask ourselves, 'where are these sufferings heading to'? It is in these situations we are called to personalize and respond in faith to God even though we undergo intense pain and sufferings.

Many times, after having accompanied Jesus for a long time in our lives considering him as our master, we tend to sacrifice our love for Jesus and the kingdom values when we want to remain in the comfort zone of our lives.

In those situations, let us ask God for the strength and courage to overcome these subtle temptations in life and renew our relationship with God responding to the eternal word as Joshua and the other tribes of Israel gave up worshipping the God of the Amorites and accepted Yahweh as their true God and worshipped him.

Shebin C.S