



CELEBRATING AT HOME
21ST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Lord, who shall we go to? (Jn 6:60-69)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

We are the body of Christ.

**We are gathered with the whole Church,
those living among us and those now in glory,
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,
you reveal the Father's love in your Word.

Lord Jesus,
you feed us with your body and blood.

Lord Jesus,
you lead us in grace and truth.

Scripture Reading (*John 6:60-69*)

After hearing this doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascended to where he was before?

It is the spirit that gives life,
the flesh has nothing to offer .

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?'

Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

Reflection - *Lord, who shall we go to*

The affirmation of faith in God by the people in the first reading from the Old Testament book of Joshua is echoed by Peter's affirmation of faith in Jesus in the Gospel. Joshua says: It's decision time. Who will be your God? The people answer: We remember what God has done for us. We have no intention of deserting the Lord our God - unlike some of the followers of Jesus in the Gospel.

Our excursion into the 'Bread of Life' passages of Chapter 6 of Saint John's Gospel comes to an end today.

Over the last four Sundays, St John has taken us on a journey of discovering Jesus as the *living Word of God* who nourishes and strengthens us on our journey; as the *living bread* who gives his very self (flesh and blood) for the life of the world; and, today, as the *bread of faith*. Those who share the bread of faith are those who have chosen to believe in Jesus and follow him.

Only by drawing life from Jesus can one be drawn into the life of God. We feed on Jesus so that he becomes part of us and his life continues to grow in us and our life becomes caught up in his. That life draws us into communion with the life of God. We become sharers in that life, our awareness of which is nourished and strengthened as we eat and drink.

This meditation from John is about how Jesus is still present and a source of faith and nourishment in the life of the post-resurrection Christian community. The 'real presence' of Jesus lives on in the community. That presence is perceived by faith and received as living Word, food and drink, nourishing disciples in their journey to be the 'real presence' of Jesus in the world, the everlasting sign of God's love for all.

At Eucharist we gather in communion with each other, with Jesus the Word, with Jesus the Bread and Wine. We are doing in a sacramental way what Jesus is doing in a real way within us. The Eucharist is teaching us how to live our lives as Christian disciples: how to be in communion with God and each other through our communion with Jesus.

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What we physically eat and drink become us. Food changes and transforms cells, blood, muscle, tissue and organs. The purpose of Christian life is for us to become Christ. Having faith, being nourished by him changes and transforms us into his body and blood for the life of the world. We become the real presence of Jesus in the world today.

Connections to the Eucharist

The words of the Gospels of these five Sundays parallel our experience of celebrating the Eucharist. There are three 'holy communions' at mass, not one. There is the communion of believers, as the people of Christ gather to celebrate the Eucharist; the communion of the Word when we listen together to the Scriptures; and the communion of the Bread and Wine when we eat and drink together. These communions are *holy* because, through Christ, God and human beings are in communion with one another and God is at work nourishing, healing, redeeming and forming the face of his Son within us – so that we may be the living presence of Christ in the world today.

Feasting on Christ in Word and Sacrament, we too, are called to nourish and strengthen each other on our journey to God.

Prayers of Intercession

Eternal God,

**Guide our choices and our decisions
to reflect your wisdom and love.**

Bless our marriages and covenants of friendship with strength,
so that we may faithfully live these commitments.

Be close to the broken hearted, the suffering and all who bear the suffering of broken dreams and lost love.
Make us the bread of compassion and comfort.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Loving God,
you sustain us as your people.
Strengthen us, your family, by the power of your enlivening Spirit.
**This we ask through Christ, the Word and the
Bread of eternal life. Amen.**

Blessing

Lord,
**carry us peacefully through this coming week.
Amen.**



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
Australia & Timor-Leste

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