

Chaplain's Bulletin August 11, 2024



Dear Folks,

Week 3 of our journey through John chapter 6 we get deeper into the issue. Using our first reading as a guide (1Kings 19:4-8), we reflect on what we need to sustain us. There is danger of the illusion that we are self-sufficient, that we can just get by on will power.

When I started college, I decided that I would just get six hours of sleep a night so that I would have more time to study. That was a big mistake. I was not able to understand, retain or focus like I could have. Some people think if they are in a hurry, they can function on just coffee and doughnuts, but that does not sustain them long term.

God gives us many gifts, including the sustenance of the Eucharist, the healing of the sacrament of reconciliation, the Sabbath rest, and the support and challenge of Christian community. If we decide we don't need those gifts, we may find that the journey is too long for us (1 Kings 19:7).

If we are physically exhausted, we often need to be more attentive to rest and nutrition. If we have lost our sense of purpose, falling into despair, overwhelmed, crushed, or can't seem to care anymore; maybe we need to be more attentive to Jesus. He is always, always ready for us to sit silently with Him, talk to Him, and encounter Him in the Bible or any other way we pray. Is it time for confession? Most importantly, Jesus calls us to the Eucharistic liturgy. He paid a heavy price for teaching about this gift (we shall read that Gospel in a couple of weeks), so He must think it especially important. If he placed such importance on it, what sort of priority should we give it?

As an aside, there is a tidbit in the second reading from Ephesians (4:30-5:2) worth pointing out. "So be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God for a fragrant aroma (Eph 5:1-2). " We first find an offering for a fragrant aroma offered by Noah in Genesis 8. Exodus 29 gives instructions for such an offering. Ezekiel 20:41 suggests the people can be accepted as an offering for a fragrant aroma. It is with this background I would read Ephesians 5:1-2, and also 2 Corinthians 2:15:16. Remember, the Bible is full of connections, and, though written over many centuries and by many hands, point to God's one work of salvation. It all fits together.

Blessings,
Fr. Jim