

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 11, 2018

7:00 p.m.

Migrant Camp

Before Mass, after the Greeting:

Good evening! I'm so glad to be here with you on this beautiful summer evening. I'm also very happy to be here with our dear priests, Fathers Oscar, Leo, and German; as well as our dear Sisters. We come together here, in this beautiful outdoor setting, looking for some spiritual rest, encouragement and nourishment.

As we prepare to celebrate these Sacred Mysteries, let us call to mind our sins and ask God's mercy and forgiveness.

Homily:

I'm sure you are all tired after a long day, and a long week, of hard work. At least you can take comfort in the fact that tomorrow is Sunday, and I hope you will find some time for well-deserved rest.

The Scripture Readings this evening provide a message from our Loving God that assures us that He is always present with us, and even when we might feel tired, discouraged, or confused, He is always with us to lift us up, and give us Heavenly Food to sustain us.

The First Reading this evening was rather unusual. Usually the Scripture Readings raise our hearts and minds to God, and most of the time, we see special people, like the holy Prophets of God, who are asked by God to be the ones to speak directly to the people, to encourage them to live their lives according to God's ways. But in tonight's Reading, it's God's Prophet who is discouraged, confused, and ready to give up.

Elijah, was a great Prophet of God, who had been bold in his speaking God's Word to everyone, including Jezebel, the Queen herself. Queen Jezebel didn't like what Elijah had to say, so she had declared that Elijah should be put to death. So, Elijah decided to run away and hide. That's where we find him in our Reading this evening. Elijah was so tired of being "on the run" that as we heard, laid down

under the “broom tree” and said to God: *“This is enough, O Lord! Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”* That is a pretty desperate point in life to be.

There may be times when we have a pretty difficult time, perhaps we find that things are not going so well; perhaps we feel like we’re not making any progress, and the future looks bleak. Maybe we feel like Elijah, just laying down and telling the Lord: “I can’t keep going on; I just want it all to end.” But even if things look bleak from our perspective, and even if we feel like we’re at the end of our rope and can’t go any further, that’s when God will always stand with us, and reassure us that He is right there with us.

That’s what happened with Elijah; the Angel came to Elijah, told him to pick himself up, eat the food that God had provided, and keep on going. And that’s what Elijah did. He shook off his discouragement, knowing that God was with him, and he was able to keep doing what God was calling him to do.

That’s what we’re doing here together this evening, my dear friends. We come together, each of us very much in touch with our own circumstances, dealing with our own problems. But here, we listen to God’s Word which reminds us that He is right here with us, and will never leave us. He provides for us His Word to give us encouragement, and His Food to be our strength.

And that’s exactly what we heard Jesus tell us in this evening’s Gospel passage. First of all, Jesus tells us, like He told the Jews: *“Stop murmuring among yourselves!”* Perhaps another way of saying that is to hear Jesus say to us: “Stop feeling so discouraged. Sure, you’ve got problems. But I’m here with you to help you deal with your problems. Don’t try to handle all this on your own. When you try to do that, you’re going to just get discouraged, like Elijah the tired and confused Prophet. Allow me to help you. Allow me to walk along and accompany you along your way. You don’t have to do all this by yourself.”

Isn’t that a wonderful message for Jesus to give to us? We have to open our ears to hear Jesus, and open our hearts to know that He wants to be with us. And after we do that---after we open our hearts to Jesus, then we can understand Him when He says to us----to ALL of us: *“I am the Bread of Life; I am the living Bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this Bread will live forever.”*

My sisters and brothers, what a wonderful Promise Jesus makes; what an amazing offer Jesus gives to us. We don’t have to walk along our life’s journey alone. We don’t have to keep “murmuring” to ourselves. We need to come to

Jesus, tell Him our problems, share with Him our heavy loads, let Him know what our questions are, and what it is that is confusing us. And that's when Jesus will say to us: "Stop murmuring! Let ME be your food to strengthen you along your way. Let MY WORD guide you along your way. Let the Gift of the Holy Eucharist--My REAL and TRUE Presence, be that which accompanies you along your way, throughout your life.

St. Paul tells us how to do that in today's Second Reading. He tells us: "*Be imitators of God---Live in His Love, as Christ loves us.*" The more we live in Jesus' love, the more we try to live like Jesus lived---to imitate Jesus in our lives---the more we will find the way to true and lasting happiness.

As we continue with our Mass, let us rejoice that our God loves us SO much that He speaks His Word of Life to our hearts, and gives us the Eucharist to nourish us, to help us to turn our "murmurs" into prayers of praise, and to help us to push aside anything that discourages us, and continue on our way thru this world, as we prepare to live with Him forever in Heaven.

God bless you, now and always.