

A Short Teaching on Flesh to Bread to Life
by Deacon Gerry Palermo

Greetings on this Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings: Prv 9:1-6; Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Eph 5:15-20; Jn 6:51-58

The Church reads the Gospel of John, Chapter Six over the course of five weeks. This is week four. In the fourth week, the fourth question: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

(The three prior questions are: (1) ... five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many? (2) What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? (3) Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph? Do we not know his father and mother?

“How?” Jesus remains firm in his position and states it more specifically: Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.

We know that flesh has always been a part of the plan, always presented in combination with bread, (1) in the sacrifice of the Cross and (2) in the resurrection to Life (Jn 6:54)

Manna and Quail. Bread and Fish. Bread and Lamb.

How?

When a mother breast feeds her baby, does the mother die? Is the baby considered a cannibal?

No, of course not. A Mother is perfectly made to breast feed and her daughter or son are perfectly made to receive this food from her. In fact, most Mothers will agree with this statement: The fullness of the love between a husband and wife, a baby in the womb, the pain of delivery... the fullness is made complete when after giving birth and she nurses the new born at her breast. She feeds true food and true drink to her new born baby. And the opposite, to not have breast milk could mean certain death.

Jesus lives before, during and after he gives us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink. He is perfectly conformed to give his live continuously from age to age. In the Transubstantiation, Jesus transmits the essence of God through Eucharistic flesh and blood just as a Mother feeds her new born baby. You can say the gift of flesh and blood come after the birth pain of the Cross.

To the one who lacks understanding, she says, Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed! (Pr 9:5) Come share in the very Esse of God (Latin).

Peace be with you.

Deacon Gerry