

During this unprecedeted time in our world's history,
we offer you the following material for your praying and reflecting on God's Word.

Introduction - August 22, 2021

In this week's Gospel, Jesus concludes his Bread of Life discourse, in which He speaks of his Body as true food and his Blood as true drink, by challenging those who have listened to him to either accept the truth or to leave. He has offered the gift, but he will not force people to accept it. Some depart because the acceptance of the Bread of Life and all that it entails is too challenging. It will cause them to have to change their thinking and their lives in ways which they are not willing to do. When Jesus turns to his closest disciples, he asks if they will also leave. Peter, as spokesperson, responds, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." Peter realizes that he does not fully understand, but that for him there is no hope for a relationship with God except by accepting the invitation offered by Jesus.

Lectio Divina with the Sunday Gospel

Lectio Divina means 'divine reading'. It is a way to pray using the holy scriptures in a step-by-step process. Gather the entire family around and make the sign of the Cross. Light a candle.

Leader: "Holy Spirit, you inspired the authors of Sacred Scripture to write what you wanted us to know for the sake of our salvation. Inspire us now to hear those words not only with our ears, but our hearts, so that we might know your saving Word for us today."

- Have one person **read** the scripture slowly, out loud and have a few moments of silence afterwards. (It may be helpful for everyone to have a copy of the reading).
- **Read** the scripture again out loud and choose a single word or short phrase that touches, speaks or surprises you. Share with everyone.
- **Read** the scripture out loud one more time and discuss what is happening directly in the text.
- **Meditate** on what God is doing now in our lives through this text.
- **Respond** to what God is doing through prayer.
- **Contemplate** on what God is asking of me through this text and how to use these words as a gift for others through my actions.
- After a period of silence, end with the Sign of the Cross.

The Holy Gospel for August 22, 2021

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to the people:

"Very truly, I tell you,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,
you have no life in you."

When many of his disciples heard this, they said:

"This teaching is difficult;

who can accept it?"

But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it,
said to them, "Does this offend you?

Then what if you were to see the Son of Man
ascending to where he was before?

It is the spirit that gives life;
the flesh is useless.

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

But among you there are some who do not believe."

For Jesus knew from the first
who were the ones that did not believe,
and who was the one that would betray him.

And he said,

"For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me
unless it is granted them by my Father."

Because of this many of his disciples turned back,
and no longer went about with him.

So Jesus asked the twelve,

"Do you also wish to go away?"

Simon Peter answered him,

"Lord, to whom can we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

We have come to believe and know
that you are the Holy One of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

(see over)

Family Activities

As you gather, light a red candle and display it in the middle of your gathering. Remember that the Holy Spirit is what gives us life.

Faith in our God is not getting what we want; rather, it is giving God what he wants from us. God gives us what we need and that may be completely different than what we expect.

- ❖ Reflect on a time when you had to make a difficult decision. What did you do to help make the decision? Who helped you make the decision to follow Jesus? Most often times than not, it is a decision made with your heart rather than your head. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that also helps us.
- ❖ Again some of the disciples doubted Jesus and could not accept his words. They turn around, they change the subject. Reflect on a time when Jesus' teaching was difficult for you to understand and/or accept. Why is it so difficult? How do you answer Jesus' question 'Do you also wish to go away?'
- ❖ In what way(s) does the gift of the Eucharist continually transform you?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, bread of life.

You offer your flesh for the life of the world.

Feed us with this your body and blood,

By which you strengthen our love, our courage, our faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

One God forever and ever.

Amen.