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NOURISHMENT FOR THE SOUL

By Sr. Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

Jesus said to the crowds:

*"I am the living bread that came down from heaven;
whoever eats this bread will live forever;
and the bread that I will give
is my flesh for the life of the world."*

JOHN 6:51

Reflection

The Church has invited us to reflect on the Eucharist, which is central to our lives as followers of Jesus. Eucharist that nourishes our souls and impels us toward ministry is key for us who desire to bring people together and bring them to God.

Today's Gospel invites us to ponder our own experience of being nourished by

God in word and sacrament. This reflection is for people of all faiths -- for you might experience Eucharist as sacrament or Eucharist as your desire for God in your life.

We are called to be Eucharistic People, a people of thanksgiving and presence. There is a fuller meaning of Eucharist. Yes, our souls are nourished in receiving the body of Christ. We are strengthened for our daily living. As the psalmist proclaims, ***“Taste and See the goodness of the Lord.”*** (Psalm 34:9) The desire for God urges us to pause and ponder the one who comes to us in word and sacrament. As we savor the goodness of God’s abiding presence in this most tangible experience of God within us, we are drawn into the heart of God.

Yet, Eucharist does not stop at the personal encounter with Christ. As we receive ***“the living bread that came down from heaven”*** we are meant to share it with the world, to proclaim God’s love, compassion, mercy, and hope in the ordinary ways we live in relationship to others. Eucharist is to be transformative.

Fr. Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ, founder of the Sisters of St. Joseph, wrote a letter to the early community, urging us to model our lives on the virtues of Jesus in the Eucharist. He advised that it is the Eucharist that enables us to become one with God, ourselves, and our neighbors. Over the years, I have received the Eucharist nearly daily. This experience has developed in me a profound oneness with God and all creation. I feel confident that I have been blessed with many graces as I ponder the one whom I have received.

Having known the presence of God, we are sent forth to build the kingdom of God by the witness of our lives. We are meant to become the one we receive. In so doing we are to BE Eucharist for others.



Person Holding Bread with Towel

By Pixabay

For Pondering

You may experience Eucharist as a sacrament or Eucharist as desire for God.

- What has receiving Eucharist meant to you over the years?
- What is the place of Eucharist in your life?
- What are the ways you are Eucharist for others?

For Prayer

*O Jesus, effect in me a miracle of love!
As in the prayers of the Mass, bread and wine change into your body and
blood,
so may your grace and presence change my life into your life,
Making me die to the false spirit of the world, to self-love, to my countless
failings.*

*Fill me with your Spirit, with the purity of divine love, with all your virtues.
In brief, fill me with your love, as you accompany me on my life's journey.*

*Enliven in me your loving promise to always be with me.
May your indwelling presence sustain my life,
as you abide in me,
so that you may be Soul of soul,
the Principle animating all that I do.
May my life be a witness to your love and desire for all the world.
Amen.*

ADAPTED FROM FR. JEAN PIERRE MEDAILLE'S "EFFECT IN ME A MIRACLE OF LOVE"

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