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Photo by Sr. Karin Nürnberg, CSJ, from the Abbey St. Hildegard in Eibingen, Germany

HOLINESS OF TRUTH!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Excerpts from Today's Readings

On seeing it, the Israelites asked one another, "What is this?" For they did not know what it was. But Moses told them, "This is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat."

EXODUS 16:15

Paul, speaking to the Ephesians, said:

"You should put away the old self of your former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth."

EPHESIANS 4:22-24

Jesus said:

"Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you... Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread

from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” So they said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

JOHN 6:27, 32-35

Reflection

These three readings flow seamlessly together and give us a clear understanding of what truly feeds our soul. In Exodus, Moses is clearly telling the people that the bread they are eating comes from the Lord.

In Ephesians, one way to break open this passage is to reflect on how we are nurturing our own faith in the Lord. What we do to feed our faith directly correlates to our thoughts and actions. If we are following the Word of God in our lives, we are seeking to lead holy lives; not lives caught up in the web of self-promotion, power, greed, selfishness, and all the other sins that pull us away from the person we desire to be in and for the world.

In the gospel from John, we are urged to turn toward Jesus, our Savior. The bread that God gave to Moses to feed his people is now given to us through the Eucharist and living as Jesus lived. All that pulls us away from living into the fullness of the life we’ve been called to is what we must avoid. These readings call us to a deeper reflection on our lives. Questions to ask yourself might be: Where am I spending my time? With whom? What preoccupies my mind, and is it from the Lord? Am I relying on “food” that destroys my inmost being rather than nourishing my life in God?

As I delved deeper into the readings from Ephesians, I thought about the areas within me that are not from God, that lead me down paths that are contrary to my faith. Critical self-talk can sometimes be a thorn in my side. For other people, it might be constantly comparing oneself to others and experiencing yourself as coming up short. I love St. Paul’s words, “be renewed in the spirit of your minds.” When I find myself being self-critical or listening to unnecessary, negative self-talk, it helps to quiet these messages by turning to the Lord and experiencing the light and love of our Triune God. It is a way to remain steadfast and committed to the journey of life in Christ Jesus.

Holiness of Truth

O God, you know every aspect of your creation. You know every person and

creature that you breathed into life. May we seek the path of holiness with intentionality and trust.

O God, we seek to understand more fully what “holiness” means for us. We pray for the grace to seek your wisdom and spirit of truth in our prayer and in the depths of our being.

O God, may the food we most desire be food for our souls. Let us drink from the well of knowledge found in Jesus, and may we be open to the grace you so generously bestow upon us.



Illustration by Philip Barrington

For Pondering

- Reflecting on the passage from Ephesians, what are the stumbling blocks

you encounter that lure you back to ways not of God?

- As you reflect on your own life in faith, what feeds and nourishes your soul and enables you to remain faithful to the person God created you to be?
- Perhaps one of the stanzas from "Holiness of Truth" speaks to you. Spend a few moments and ponder why this might be touching something within you.

For Prayer

*We pray that each of us take a deep, honest look within
and begin to make changes in our lives
that speak and point to our desire to follow you, O God.
May we be beacons of light that assist others in their life's journey,
and may we remember that the food that nourishes us comes from you,
our Triune God.
Amen.*

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