

April 16, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's Gospel

The crowd said to Jesus: "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

So Jesus said to them, "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 Jesus, "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 6:30-35

Reflection

As I prayed this scriptural passage from John, a song I learned as a young child came to mind, “I am the Bread of Life,” and I found myself singing it to God as a response to his Word. I love singing, listening to Christian music, and praising God in this manner. It fills and touches my inmost being. If this is what happens to you, do it now!

For those of you who don’t enjoying singing, perhaps listening to this hymn from our past (and present) will alight anew within you. I want to describe what happens to me when I sing this song. First, I’m taken back to my childhood and remember that I loved singing even then, though I was quite shy and didn’t really let anyone know I felt this way. What I recall is feeling a deep sense of peace even if I didn’t quite grasp the deeper meaning underneath the lyrics I was singing from the pews.

This same sense of peace remains in me when I sing or listen to songs today, as an adult well into my life’s journey with more years behind me than before me! Over time, I came to grasp the deeper messages held within the songs we sing. When I sing and reflect on what I’m singing, I’m filled with a sense of God so nearby. I touch into the deep, loving, energy I have for the Beloved and the Beloved for me. It is a way to express this love that dwells within and in singing, I release this love back to the One who sent and planted this love within me.

Bread of Life

O God who kneaded me into being, may the unleavened bread of my being arise with the joy and peace that flows from a love you give that knows no bounds.

O God, may my hunger be not in food I prepare, but in drawing ever closer to you. Whet my appetite for being a conduit of your grace and light.

O God, may my thirst be only for you. As I seek to quench a thirst that seems insatiable, may I find relief in embracing my belief in the One you sent, Jesus.

O God, no one comes to you unless you draw us. We pray to remain steadfast in our belief and love for you in the One you sent.

May we rise up with you on the last day. May we rise up with you each day! Let us live our belief in you, our Beloved.



St. Bridget Chinese Catholic Church in Los Angeles
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- If you have the song, "I Am the Bread of Life" -- listen to it now. What is happening within you as you listen and/or sing along? Let God know what you are feeling and experiencing and let this be your prayer.
 - How do you experience your own hunger and thirst for God? Reflect on your response and allow your own prayers to surface.
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For Prayer

*O God who is the only one who can quench our thirst and hunger,
we lift up all those who hunger and thirst for a relationship with you.
At the same time, we pray for all those who are suffering
from food and water insecurity,
and may we work to alleviate both so all might live and thrive in you.
Amen.*

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