
19 Sunday

20th SUNDAY of Ordinary Time

Proverbs 9: 1 - 6
Ps 33: 2,3,9-15
Ephesians 5: 15-20
John 6: 51 - 58

"I am the living bread which has come down from heaven". Surely one of the most momentous statements Jesus made about Himself, and one of the most controversial. Immediately in St John's gospel we hear that arguments broke out among his listeners, about what He meant. Jesus' further explanations didn't solve the arguments. Indeed at the end of the chapter we find even some of His own disciples couldn't accept what He was saying, and stopped going with Him.

It must indeed have sounded outrageous or even blasphemous that day, when He claimed to be "the bread of life". He even said that without eating of His flesh and drinking His blood people could not have life in themselves. It has seemed ridiculous to many people ever since. But we Christians have taken Him at His word, believe what He said, and try to understand as best we can. The Eucharist we share is, for us, a confirmation that we believe Him when He said, at His last supper, that the bread He broke and blessed is His body, the wine He blessed and shared is His blood.. On the strength of His word, we believe this is how we share His life, a risen everlasting life. It sounds tremendous, fantastic, unbelievable.

The awesome, wonderful mystery of the Eucharist is beyond our human capacity to grasp. We have grace-moments, sometimes, of insight into its meaning, and a feeling of being overwhelmed by God's love. So we praise and thank the Lord. And, sometimes, perhaps doubts about how this awesome gift of God could be. Then let's ask the grace of the Spirit to draw us closer in familiarity with this Jesus who gives Himself to be our life.