

[111] **NINETEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME** **B**

FIRST READING

Strengthened by the food, Elijah walked to the mountain of the Lord.

A reading from the first book of Kings

19:4-8

Elijah walked through the desert for a whole day.

Finally, he came to a large bush and sat in its shade.

Then he prayed to die.

“Lord,” he said, “I have had all I can take.

Let me die! I’m no better than my ancestors.”

After saying this,

he lay in the shade of the bush and fell asleep.

Suddenly an angel touched Elijah and said, “Get up and eat!”

Elijah looked around,

and by his head was a jar of water

and some bread that had been baked over coals.

After eating and drinking, he lay back down.

Soon the Lord’s angel came back and touched Elijah again.

This time the angel said, “Get up and eat,

or else the trip will be too hard for you.”

The food gave Elijah strength,

and he traveled for forty more days

until he reached Mount Sinai, the mountain of God.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

34:1-2, 3-4, 7-8

R. (9a) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will always praise the Lord.

With all my heart,

I will praise the Lord.

let all who are helpless

listen and be glad.

R. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Honor the Lord with me!
Celebrate his great name.
I asked the Lord for help,
and he saved me
from all my fears.

R. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

If you honor the Lord,
his angel will protect you.
Discover for yourself
that the Lord is kind.
Come to him for protection,
and you will be glad.

R. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

SECOND READING

Walk in love, just as Christ.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians

4:31 – 5:2

Brothers and sisters:

Stop being bitter and angry and mad at others.
Don't yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude.
Instead, be kind and merciful,
and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.

Do as God does.
After all, you are his dear children.
Let love be your guide.
Christ loved us and offered his life for us
as a sacrifice that pleases God.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

John 6:51

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the living bread from heaven, says the Lord;
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

I am the living bread come down from heaven.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to John

6:48-51

Jesus said to the crowd:

“I am the bread that gives life!

Your ancestors ate manna in the desert,
and later they died.

But the bread from heaven has come down,
so that no one who eats it will ever die.

“I am the bread from heaven!

Everyone who eats it will live forever.

My flesh is the life-giving bread
that I give to the people of this world.”

The gospel of the Lord.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME — Cycle B

Prayer: Dear Jesus, We know you love us because you give us your holy bread to eat. We thank you for giving us yourself in this bread. We hope we can give our love to others like you did. AMEN.

Readings: 1 Kings 19:4-8; Ps 34; Eph 4:30-5:2; John 6:41-51

We move even deeper into the “Bread of Life” discourse of John’s Gospel. For the next Sundays, we follow along this discourse. The history, stories and images of “bread” have been a part of people’s lives from the Hebrew/Old Testament Scriptures even until now. A main point: BREAD is LIFE. Bread, in some shape and consistency is a stable food in every culture.

The Jews “murmur” because Jesus indicates he has come “down from heaven” and those who come to him “will live forever.” Jesus reveals the mystery of “living bread” as a sign of those who will enter eternal life because of their belief in him.

“Amen. Amen,” Jesus says whoever believes in him, in the bread, a sign of eternal life, “will live forever.” These are matters of faith; mysteries beyond our human understanding. Jesus looks like JUST the son of Joseph. The bread looks like JUST ordinary bread. It is what one BELIEVES as one tries to “live in love” that makes all the difference.

A link to the second reading is clear: “Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love...” We share “the bread” to “imitate” what Jesus did. We share “the bread” around a table, as the family of God—God’s beloved children. We share “the bread” to gain strength for the journey and to be part of the Body.

Activities: Bring a small loaf of bread. With the children talk about a “favorite family food.” Make a list. Then ask if they ever eat this/these food(s) other places. What makes it special? The meaning of the people who come to the table to eat. Certain foods, at certain times, in certain places, with certain intention, mean something special.

The same is true with Jesus. Jesus is everywhere. Bread is everywhere. But this Gospel story tells us, and we believe, when we come around the altar, to eat “this bread” made holy by our gathering—it is different. Just like when a family gathers for a special meal—Mass is special for this family of God! Jesus says: “...my flesh [is] for the life of the world.” We come to mass, to celebrate being the family of God, to learn and gather strength to be “life for the world”—to be imitators of God. To truly imitate a person, means to do something with the same intention of the one being imitated. (Not just being a copy-cat or acting like someone to make an impression.) So, people can have the same food other places, but if it isn’t shared with the same intention/meaning—it is different! Other people do deeds of great kindness and compassion but not always because they believe in Jesus. We share a certain type of bread, at mass, with the intention of being one with Jesus and each other.

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To conclude the session:

Bread is a sign we are members of the ONE Body of Christ. Take the loaf of bread.

Begin your prayer time by explaining you, or another catechist, will give each child a piece of bread. The children don't eat the piece—just hold it in their hand until everyone has a piece. Explain, a prayer will be made, then together, those gathered will say: AMEN. At the end, we will eat the bread.

Then the prayer leader says: Dear Jesus, we want to imitate your love for others. We want to be kind to everyone. AMEN. We want to tell the truth at all times. AMEN. We want to obey our parents. AMEN. We want to do our best. AMEN.

Jesus, help us to be imitators of you in everything we do. AMEN. And, dear Jesus, we want to do everything for love of you. AMEN. (Eat the bread.)

If you know the song, "AMEN" based on a melody from ***Lilies of the Field***, you might want to sing it or another appropriate song to close.

Just in case you want other images from the reading from 1 Kgs, here are the images to build on: wandering in the desert; eating and drinking as the Lord directs; forty days and nights and a mountain, Horeb.