

18 Sunday B

August 5, 2018

St. Patrick

Theme: Trusting with enough

How many times have we prayed the Lord's Prayer and the words slide off our tongue, "**Give us this day our *daily* bread**"?

They were a bunch of whiners—the chosen people. Just ten weeks earlier God had worked for them the miracle you would think set them firm in faith. Ten weeks earlier God had parted the Red Sea and led, with Moses in the front, all the chosen people across the dry land. Then, when Pharaoh and his charioteers followed in pursuit to whip them back into slavery...well, you know the story: Pharaoh and his ilk drowned, and the chosen people were on their way to freedom.

But they were a bunch of whiners. Ten weeks later, *all* the chosen people "**grumbled**" against Moses. They were going hungry as they journeyed in the desert. Now, granted, that's not an ideal situation, but...don't you fancy they would have remembered that God had just saved them?

Then God told Moses, "**I will rain down bread from heaven for you. *Each day the people are to go out and gather their daily portion; thus I will test them...***"

Cleverly God devised a way that would show the chosen people how much they had to depend on God. It was feeding them with "manna," and that would be their test, that God would give them enough for the day. You see, the people had to trust that the following morning, God would supply the manna once again. They were to take *only* enough for one day—for them and their family. Some in the group—you know, the obsessive worriers—they would scoop up extra, anxious about the next day. They wanted security. But anything extra they gathered, anything they hoarded, well..., as the Book of Exodus tells us, "**it became wormy and rotten**" (16:24). Ugh... gross! They could only have enough for the day. Each day they had to trust, placing their total dependence on God. Their very lives depended wholly on God's gracious gifts showered on them each morning.

St. Patrick's: Don't our lives depend just as much on God's providence—*each day*?

“Give us this day our *daily* bread.” Sisters and brothers: On *our* journey together—just like the chosen people in their desert wanderings— we are to trust deeply that Christ Jesus will feed us with his teaching and himself as the Bread of Life (1).

A few years ago a Catholic woman asked to meet with me, and she went over with me her spiritual journey. She loves her faith but, when the news was splashed for the first time about the clergy sex abuse scandal—only worsening with time—she became very angry with the Catholic Church. She stopped going to Mass. I asked her why did she return? She told me simply that her soul was hungry for the Bread of Life. This Jesus means too much to her, and she made the comment—it struck me deeply—that now she’s no longer hungry.

Jesus warns us: **“Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life which the Son of Man will give you.”**

Seeking security—sure, with our families and ourselves, we need to plan ahead...but, with a balance. When we hoard and take in as much as we can get—our play toys and showy stuff; when we don’t really *share* in a hungry world: we might have full bellies, but we’ll have empty hearts.

In his very first major document as Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis taught about this “balance,” and he quoted approvingly from the great 4th century teacher, St. John Chrysostom: **“Not to share one’s wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs”** (2).

“Give us this day our *daily* bread.”

It takes a deep trust to rely on Jesus’ promise. Some days I don’t think I have enough to keep on. Have you ever had that sense?—wondering if you’ll get depleted and, deep within, starve spiritually.

Friends: Jesus *is* the Bread of life—for today, and we are called to trust that he’ll fill us the next day.

“Give us this day our *daily* bread.”

- (1) See Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS, When we pray...Meditations on the Lord's Prayer (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1983), pp. 120-22.
- (2) Quoting St. John Chrysostom, De Lazaro Concio, II, 6: PG 48, 992D; in Evangelii Gaudium (November 24, 2013), #57.

General Intercessions

August 5, 2018

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Sustain us, your church, with a true trust, that we live as a people depending on your care and nourishment;
we pray to you, O Lord—**

**Bless all students as they begin this new school year, that the Holy Spirit grant them the gifts of wisdom and understanding;
we pray to you, O Lord—**

**Embolden teachers, that they may share their knowledge with gentleness, patience, and a concern for their students;
we pray to you, O Lord—**

**Inspire parents, the first teachers of their children, that their faith and love may be a daily example within their family;
we pray to you, O Lord:**

**As we remember this week the 73rd anniversary of the atomic explosions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, empower us to be true peacemakers, rejecting violence and working for disarmament;
we pray to you, O Lord—**

Embrace with love those who suffer from mental illness, from addictions, and from all other infirmities; we pray to you, O Lord—

(for the 8:30 a.m. Mass only--)

Fulfill the desire for eternal life in all who have died with hope, especially Carolyn Adcock, on the third anniversary of her death today; we pray to you, O Lord—

