

Fr. Martin's Reflection – August 11, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Being a disciple of Christ on a good day is easy, but being a disciple of Christ on a bad day is challenging and difficult. But it's important to remember Christ told us that it was going to be difficult, "Are you able to drink the cup I must drink?" and elsewhere he said, "You must take up your cross and follow me." For most of us we just want an easy life. Can we not just say our prayers and go to mass and live in peace? Of course, God doesn't want us to go out and find trouble, God doesn't want us to pick fights or be argumentative. God wants us to live a life of love and peace. But being a follower of Christ, being his disciple, attracts all kinds—the good, the bad, and the indifferent. Attracting the good is wonderful and life giving, but attracting the bad is challenging and often difficult. They attack and challenge us. They try to undermine our confidence and faith in God and can be threatening. It is at times like this we want to do what Elijah does in our first reading, we run and hide, and in extreme cases, beg God to take us home.

In our first reading we have this beautiful scene where God comes and wakens Elijah and encourages him to eat, "Get up and eat, else the journey will be too long for you!" He got up, ate, and drank; then strengthened by that food, he walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb.' What's our journey? Is it to get through this day, or this coming week? Maybe there are tests we must take, results we must receive, decisions we must make that will affect the lives of others. Maybe we are changing schools or leaving home for the first time.

All these things can be very frightening and overwhelming. Like Elijah, will we eat of the food that God gives us to eat, food that will strengthen us and sustain us for the journey we must make while in this world? What is that food? It is Christ's Body and Christ's Blood given to us in the Eucharist. It strengthened the disciples in the days and weeks following the crucifixion and death of Jesus, but it also strengthened and sustained them in their mission of bringing God's word to all people. This same Eucharist will strengthen us and sustain us in our earthly mission through the challenges and changes of life. Christ Jesus told us in Jn 6:55 "For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink." Dear friends, whatever lies ahead, feed of Christ's body and blood, and allow him to strengthen you in every situation of life.

Have a blessed and nourishing week.

Fr. Martin