

Fr. Martin's Reflection – July 28, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The promise that Jesus held out to the Galileans is one that is held out to us today. It is a promise fulfilled in the Eucharist. If there is one thing we all share it is the same hunger. We hunger for a love that does not disappoint; we hunger for a word that does not fade away; we hunger for bread that does not fail to satisfy. Each celebration of the Eucharist offers us the love of a tender God both in word and in sacrament.

The Second Vatican Council emphasized this great truth when it declared that the Church "never ceases to partake of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the Word of God and the Body of Christ" (*Dei verbum* 21).

We are nourished by God's word and the bread of life. The word spoken is opened up to us, the bread offered is broken for us to share. This is not something we come to look at, like a still-life painting in an art gallery; rather it is something we come to do. The Eucharist is a word that flows into deed; it is an *action*. It is the act of sharing in the bread of life, participating in the life of Jesus himself.

We come to church because we are hungry for God, because the food that physically satisfies is not enough for us. There are times when we wish we were elsewhere, times when what happens at Mass will leave us untouched, times when we will be distracted by a litany of worries that refuse to go away. No matter. Sometimes we have to be content with the act of faith that brings us to Church, a public admission of our need for God and the people of God. Here we declare that we cannot fall back on our own resources; we need Jesus, the bread of life, to sustain us. Staying hungry for his bread means that we do indeed long for the food that endures to eternal life. That is what Jesus asks. (*Denis McBride C.Ss.R.*)

World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

This weekend we celebrate World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. Pope Francis has chosen a line from Psalm 71 -- "Do not cast me off in my old age" -- as the theme for the 2024 celebration. The choice is meant to call attention to the fact that, sadly, loneliness is the bitter lot in life of many elderly persons, so often the victims of the throwaway culture. By cherishing the charisms of grandparents and the elderly, and the contribution they make to the life of the Church, the World Day seeks to support the efforts of every community to forge bonds between the generations and to combat loneliness.

Prayer for Grandparents & the Elderly

I thank You, Lord, for the comfort of Your presence: even in times of loneliness. You are my hope and my confidence, You have been my rock and my fortress since my youth! I thank You for having given me a family and for having blessed me with a long life. I thank You for moments of joy and difficulty, for the dreams that have already come true in my life and for those that are still ahead of me. I thank You for this time of renewed fruitfulness to which You call me. Increase, O Lord, my faith, make me a channel of your peace, teach me to embrace those who suffer more than me, to never stop dreaming and to tell of your wonders to new generations. Protect and guide the Church, that the light of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth. Send Your Spirit, O Lord, to renew the world, that the storm of the pandemic might be calmed, the poor consoled and wars ended. Sustain me in weakness and help me to live life to the full in each moment that You give me, in the certainty that you are with me every day, even until the end of the age. Amen. (Pope Francis)

Fr. Martin