



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I'm back to writing articles now that Nick's assignment is over. When I was thinking of this day, I thought I would be writing more than two articles... but I had no idea at the beginning of the summer that this would be my last summer at St. Patrick Parish. The world is like that, though... our lives can change with a single phone call – for good or for bad. Our part is to live each day with all the love we can, trying to follow God wherever He leads.

This weekend's Gospel is the beginning of the Bread of Life discourse. Last week, we heard how Jesus fed the 5000. They want more, and so come looking for Him. At the end of today's Gospel, Jesus says to them, and to us, **"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst"** (John 6:35). He promises to

fill our emptiness, feed our hunger. He does this in many ways, but primarily through the gift of His very self in the Eucharist.

I am always amazed that God made us in such a way that only He will satisfy us! I think God puts that hunger in us for a reason – so that we will seek Him. He wants us to want Him. He desires for us to be in union with Him – not to be animals or robots, but His free children in a real loving relationship with Him. The problem is that we end up turning that desire inward instead of outward; we seek to satisfy it ourselves, instead of allowing God to. Every sin is because we take our satisfaction in our own hands, not trusting God's providential love for us. It proves to be our undoing. Adam and Eve reached out for the fruit, thinking that this is what they needed to satisfy their hunger... and it was all downhill from there! Think about all the messes you've gotten into in your life. How many of them were caused by the fact that you (or someone else around you) tried to satisfy yourself instead of trusting in God to satisfy your hunger?

Jesus says that we are to work for the food that endures – the works of God. When asked what the works of God are, He replied, **"This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent"** (John 6:29). We're invited to believe in Jesus. Belief, though, is not simply an intellectual assent to the proposition that Jesus is God. We might have a full academic understanding of the truth that Jesus is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity hypostatically united to a human nature without confusion or change, without division or separation... and yet not know Him. Belief means that we know Him and trust Him to do as He says He'll do. It means that our lives are formed in such a way that they don't make sense if God is not real. As the old saying goes: If Christianity were illegal, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

The Lord is inviting us to lean on Him, to trust Him, to believe in Him. He gives us His very self in the Eucharist so that we can get a foretaste of heaven, so that we can be united to His Heart. If we only understood the incredible love He truly has for each of us, we would be overwhelmed!

I invite you: if you have not already, before I leave on August 14<sup>th</sup> watch the short video "The Veil Removed" on YouTube (there is a link to it on the front page of our website). It gives us a glimpse of what is really happening at Mass, and how the Eucharist is Jesus' love for us poured out from the Cross. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, of our lives, because it is Jesus Himself, and that makes all the difference.