

## Everlasting Food!

Last week our readings centered on food and we read about different miracles of the multiplication of loaves both by Elisha and feeding of 5000 by Jesus. Today the readings, especially the first and the gospel were centered on food. I think the readings tell us that scripture recognizes the importance of food but that does not mean that we live to eat but that we eat to live, not only living in this life but to live forever.

In the first reading, the Book of Exodus describes the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt. When the food the Israelites brought with them from Egypt finished, they turned against Moses, murmured, and accused him of bringing them into the desert to die of hunger and starvation. They were not patient at all. All that God did for them was not enough for them to trust in him and to know that God would never allow them to perish. However, God was patient enough with their ignorance and lack of understanding of his steadfastness and love. Thus, he fed them generously. This is a point of reflection to us. We have to ask ourselves, how we react in the face of adversities and difficulties that beset us in our Christian journey. Do we forget in a hurry all the love God has bestowed on us and complained bitterly? The same way with our relationship with one another, are we patient with others, especially when they live below our expectation?

The Gospel is the continuation of the gospel of last week, the feeding of 500. The people came after Jesus the next day because they needed more food, which was good for them for their life. Jesus, the patient one, used the opportunity to teach them the importance of working for the food that will last. The people requested for the everlasting food. Jesus taught them about the bread of life-the everlasting food, which is the Eucharist; the gift he commanded us to celebrate in his memory for our spiritual nourishment.

The Eucharist is a word that flows into action. It is an act of sharing in the bread of life and participating in the life of Jesus himself. It is meant to renew our lives as St. Paul describes in the second reading. It is the food that gives us the strength to persevere in the face of all the trials of life. Through the Eucharist, our life of grace is increased, it brings us nearer to Christ, and it helps us to avoid sins and their occasions. The gospel brings to our awareness that as we work for material progress and pray for a healthy physical life, let us not neglect our spiritual life by putting it as secondary rather than primary. This reminds us that no matter the care and attention we give to our body it is still mortal. The soul remains immortal and indestructible. Hence, a great need to give due attention to this immortal component. As we gather to pray to God, let us also open our hearts to know what he is telling us about our lives, especially our relationship with one another. Amen.