

Fr. O'Connor's Homily – August 5, 2018

We've all been to school and have had many teachers. Maybe one or two stand out in your memory. Who was your favorite teacher? Why?

I'll tell you about one of mine, Fr. Ray Brown. He was a wonderful Scripture scholar and a good, humble man. He helped me to gain a real love for Scripture.

The 6th Chapter of St. John's Gospel is read for four Sundays in a row during the summer of year B; last Sunday, this Sunday and the next two Sundays. Fr. Brown explained that Chapter 6 has three different levels. Would you like to hear more? I hope so.

The first level we heard last week. Remember the multiplication of the loaves and fishes and the feeding of the hungry people.

Today's Gospel is the second level. Jesus tells us that He Himself is the Bread that comes down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will never be hungry.

In the next two Sundays we will hear about the bread of the Eucharist- the Body of Christ. This is the third level.

Of course, Jesus is well aware of our hungers and so the symbol of bread.

Our most primitive hunger is for bread. The hunger of the great multitude is satisfied when Jesus multiplies bread and fish.

The deepest hunger we experience is the hunger for meaning, our need for love, our need for faith, for trust, for God. Listen to Jesus' words in today's Gospel, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one He sent" and "I am the Bread of Life." "Whoever comes to me will never hunger and whoever believes in me will never thirst."

Each day we experience our need for the presence of Jesus. We long for deeper union with Him. But in our lives there are many trials and obstacles, many distractions. St. Augustine explains it this way, we are restless.

God has given us the Eucharistic Bread to feed our deepest needs for love, for meaning. Jesus draws us to Himself intimately in the Eucharist.

So we are a Eucharistic people- Bread people. We are hungry people so we keep receiving, consuming Jesus.

"I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never thirst."