

**Day 34 – Fr Jerome’s Lockdown Reflections**

**Wednesday in 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Easter – Catherine of Siena, 1380**

**29 April 2020**

**Readings: Acts 8:1b-8, Psalm 66:1-6, John 6:35-40**

Today particularly it hit me very, very hard. We left to go buy essentials after receiving our stipend. It made me very grateful. My family will still have something to eat and drink. Although isolated and longing the fellowship of our people, realising keeping away saves them and us.

Many will wake from this horrible pandemic; without work, salary and even a stipend (priests can also be retrenched). No food or drink and nothing to help them survive. The greed of many who have and take even from those who have none makes me particularly angry. This pandemic lays bare the great inequalities, poverty and unemployment and it will deepen to a greater degree in the days, months and years to come.

In the text of the gospel today it shows a people, enthusiastic with the perspective of having bread from heaven of which Jesus speaks and which gives life forever (Jn 6:33), ask: “Lord, give us always that bread!” (Jn 6:34). They thought that Jesus was speaking about some particular kind of bread. This is why, the people, interested in getting this bread, ask: “Give us always of this bread!”

This petition of the people reminds us of the conversation of Jesus with the Samaritan woman. Jesus had said that she could have had within her a spring of living water, welling up to eternal life, and she, in an interested way, asks: “Lord, give me of that water!” (Jn 4:15). The Samaritan woman is not aware that Jesus is not speaking about material water. Just as the people were not aware that Jesus was not speaking of material bread. Because of this, Jesus responds very clearly: “I am the bread of life! No one who comes to Me will ever hunger; no one who believes in Me will ever thirst”. To eat the bread of heaven is the same as believing in Jesus. And to believe that He has come from heaven as a revelation of the Father. It is to accept the way which He has taught. But the people, in spite of having seen Jesus, do not believe in Him. Jesus is aware of the lack of faith and says: “You have seen Me and you do not believe”.

The question that arise today in myself is... How am I going to show Jesus is the bread of life when people are physically hungry and in need of sustenance? How am I going to ensure that Jesus’ presence are felt with those who will struggle through great difficulties in days to come? Where will I be found... ..returned to my ‘normal’ routine and life... ..or forever changed and renewed to seek the poor, lost, hungry, lonely, sick, unemployed and the dispossessed.

People are desperate for the bread (Jesus) and you are to deliver Him to their homes.

**Prayer of the Church**  
(Inspired by John 6:35)

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.' This is the promise of God to whom we now pray.

Heavenly Father: thank you for sending your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, to be the Bread of Life for the world. Forgive us for elevating earthly appetites above devotion to you. Feed us with the knowledge of Christ so that we recognise our sin and gladly repent in his name.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose daily need for healthy food, clean water and proper shelter goes unmet, and for those misusing what they have in the vain pursuit of pleasure. Feed them with all the good things of Christ for life now and in eternity.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Have mercy on those whose lives have been broken by violence and crime. Feed them with hope and a new life in Christ. And bless our brothers and sisters in prison and those who minister to them.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Feed those who are sick or sorrowing with healing and consolation through Christ. We pray particularly for those infected with Covid-19. And meet the needs of others we know personally to be in want and whom we now name silently in our hearts... *(Brief silence)*

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father, you heard the prayers of your people in the wilderness and fed them bread from heaven despite their sin. Graciously hear us today and feed us too with the Bread of Life from heaven, even our Lord Jesus Christ, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

~ adapted from the Lutheran Church of Australia's **LCA Worship Planning Page.**

