

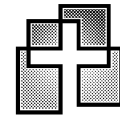
# The Gospel of John



## Notes From the Podium

*These notes are intended to augment your own reading and study of the lesson. Please use as an aid to help you incorporate the main message of the lesson into your lecture.*

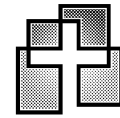
- I. First Approach – what is happening at this moment in the text?
  - a. (vv 6:22-34) The people's hunger is established.
    - i. After the feeding of the five thousand the people's hunger for Jesus grows. They go so far as to seek Him out even by way of boat to Capernaum.
    - ii. Once they come upon Him, their desire to find Him is the first thing Our Lord addresses.
      1. "...you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves." He identifies why it is they have sought Him out – He provided for them and they desire to be provided for.
      2. He attempts to raise their desire to a higher level – not to seek provisions for simply this life but for eternal life...food that will "endure to eternal life."
      3. This is the food He has been sent by the Father in Heaven to provide.
      4. He admonishes them to 'labor' for this food.
        - a. They ask exactly what they must do to labor/'work' for this food.
        - b. He responds that they must "believe in Him whom He has sent." (v 29)
        - c. They want to know how it is they can do this work – that is to believe in Him. What sign does He do to warrant such belief. Moses provided mana for their fathers in the wilderness giving them bread from Heaven to eat.
        - d. Our Lord responds by explaining that it was not Moses who provides the 'true bread from Heaven.' Rather, it is His Father in Heaven who provides such bread.
        - e. He explains that this bread will give life to the world.
        - f. They desire this 'true bread from Heaven' and say "Lord, give us this bread always."
  - b. (vv 35-51)
    - i. Verse 35, "I am the bread of life; he who *comes* to me shall not hunger, and he who *believes* in me shall never thirst." One must both *come* to Him and *believe* in Him.
      1. The people have come to Him. They sought Him out – even by boat.
      2. Yet, they must also believe. This they have not done. Verse 36, "But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe."



## Notes From the Podium (cont.)

## Catholic Scripture Study

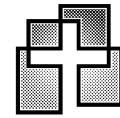
- ii. Jesus has come to faithfully fulfill the will of the Father (verse 40), “that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”
    - 1. This is a clear and exact articulation of the mission of the Son.
  - iii. The people become stuck on the statement, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.”
  - iv. Jesus responds, those who come to Him and believe in Him are ‘drawn’ by the Father. And it will be these whom He will raise on the last day.
  - v. This eternal life will be communicated by way of the bread of life. Unlike those who ate mana in the desert and died those who eat this bread will not die.
  - vi. This bread that He will give is His flesh.
- c. (vv 52-71)
- i. “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” they ask.
  - ii. Our Lord gives them a full court press – He is relentlessly clear in the face of their reluctance.
  - iii. Verse 53, “truly, truly, I say to you, unless...”
  - iv. They could barely stand to listen to this teaching.
  - v. Turning to His own disciples He questioned their acceptance of His teaching as He heard they too were murmuring.
  - vi. He declared His knowledge that there were some who did not believe and would betray Him.
  - vii. Some disciples pulled back and stop following.
  - viii. He then turned to the Twelve and questioned them, “do you also wish to go away?”
  - ix. They respond through Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have *believed*, and have *come* to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”
    - 1. This is exactly what Our Lord told them at the beginning of this passage about what they must do.
    - 2. Despite their not being able to yet understand - they trust Him and will follow.
  - x. Our Lord then indicates that one of them will betray Him – He refers to Him as a devil.
- II. Second Approach – what might be John’s pastoral point to the faithful reader? Why this account?
- a. (vv 6:22-34) John is highlighting three scandals/stumbling blocks the people are facing with respect to accepting the true gospel message. All three pertain to making our earthly existence better (by our own strength and without dying to oneself).
    - i. The first scandal was that of the *political* variety – this was addressed in the previous Lesson 7. The people were looking for a political figure to be their savior in this life.



## Notes From the Podium (cont.)

## Catholic Scripture Study

- ii. The second is addressed here, in verse 28, in the question of the people, “what must we do, to be doing the works of God?”
  - 1. The answer: believe in “Him who He has sent.”
  - 2. The answer seems hard for them to accept. They are to believe/trust in Him.
    - a. They have to come to accept that they cannot provide this bread for themselves. They must be provided for BY HIM.
      - i. Despite their desire to be provided for, they seem not to want to have to be provided for entirely. Herein lies the scandal – to be in this degree of need and indebtedness may be uncomfortable to some.
      - ii. They are in need of His/God’s grace.
    - b. One who struggles with pride might find this difficult to accept.
- b. (vv 35-51)
  - i. This scandal for the necessity of grace is played out even more.
    - 1. Not only must they be provided for by Him, but the way in which they must be provided for is all the more humiliating.
      - a. It is not enough that they must be provided for by the Son of God made man, enfleshed. To be ‘taught by God’ as Jesus quotes the prophets of having said is not sufficient.
      - b. Rather, our condition is so grave that teaching us is not enough - He must die and rise from the dead to atone for our sins and reconcile us to the Father and to one another.
      - c. This is what is meant when He says in verse 51 that “the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”
  - c. (vv 35-51)
    - i. John is impressing upon the faithful reader two phenomenal claims that the Jews have a difficult time accepting: the Incarnation & the Holy Eucharist. Furthermore, both of these claims are related. This is the third scandal to the Jews John is addressing.
      - 1. The Incarnation is that God became flesh. When Jesus says that He came down from Heaven He is claiming His status as divine.
        - a. This is a radical thought.
      - 2. The Holy Eucharist – that the Divine Son would become bread to be broken and eaten is also a radical thought and no less easy to accept.
        - a. Those who might be willing to accept the first proposition might not at all accept the second.
        - b. One who, through the divine gift of Faith, accepts the first can, even if without understanding at first, accept the second.
- ii. “One of you is a devil”
  - 1. Obstinance to truth is condemning.
    - a. It is one thing not to see the truth and quite another to reject it dishonestly.
      - i. To reject dishonestly is a prideful refusal that is not open to Truth and thus creates a hard attitude within the Heart of man that in the end will even reject He who is Truth - God.



## Notes From the Podium (cont.)

## Catholic Scripture Study

- III. Third Approach – how does is our understanding deepen/enrich in light of the Old Testament?
- a. (vv 6:22-34) Terminology/Phraseology
- i. *Son of Man* – Harkens back to Ezekiel and apocalyptically in Daniel 7:13-17 (see Points to Ponder)
1. Daniel refers to the Son of Man as one who was to appear and usher in the Last Days.
  2. He has been given everlasting power and dominion.
- ii. The Father placing His “seal” on the Son of Man – (see Points to Ponder) references in the Talmud speak of bakers making a distinctive mark on their loaves of bread.
1. The Talmud is a Jewish written compilation consisting of the *Mishna*, i.e. the codification of Jewish religious and legal norms, and of the *Gemara*, or the collection of discussions and explanations concerning the Mishna.
  2. For information on the Talmud go to <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14435b.htm>
- b. (vv 35-51)
- i. They ‘murmered’ at Him.
1. This was what those who rejected Moses did to him before they rejected him.
- c. (vv 35-51)
- i. One might note the specific mention of Jesus ‘saying this in the synagogue.’ V59.
1. There is a relationship between the Temple and synagogue.
    - a. There is one Temple of worship and many synagogues to teach and proclaim the word of God.
    - b. The Holy Eucharist is bound to the word of God. Jesus is the word of God that must be received and the Bread of Life to be eaten. They are inseparable.

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