

21st Sunday OT – John 6:60-69

“Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the **Holy One** of God.”

This is the last passage from John’s Bread of Life, and it is at the point where many of Jesus’ disciples returned to their *former way of life* and no longer accompanied him because this saying was too hard; “...**Who can accept it?**”

In *Give Us This Day reflection*, Pope Francis, at his 22nd of August *Angelus*, writes his response to the above attitude of *those who withdrew and decided not to follow Jesus any more*.

“Jesus’ words enkindled great scandal: he was saying that God decided to manifest himself and accomplish salvation in the **weakness of human flesh**. It is the mystery of the incarnation...Jesus affirms that the true bread of salvation, which transmits eternal life, is his very flesh; that to enter into communion with God, *before* observing the laws or satisfying religious precepts, it is necessary to live out a real and concrete relationship with him—because salvation came from him, in his incarnation.”

The Pope’s words are obvious. Before we came to church this morning for the Eucharist, we were living out a real and concrete relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other. As a parish faith community this possible through our many programs and prayer groups.

The Pope continues, “This means that one must not pursue God in *dreams* and in *images of grandeur and power*, but God must be recognized in the humanity of Jesus and as a consequence, **in that of the brothers and sisters we meet on the path of life...seeking him in life, in history, in our daily life.**”

If you haven’t read *Laudato Si*, I encourage you, please read it! Pope Francis writes, and under the title this passage:

“It is the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation...The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the incarnation chose to reach our intimate depths through **a fragment of matter**. He comes, not from above, but from within; he comes to be found by us in this world of ours.

Daniel O’Leary also quotes the pope under his section with the title: *The fierce Universe of Blazing Love in a **Fragile Wafer** on Our Tongue*. *The pope continues*, “...Joined to the Incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of **cosmic love**.”

If you thinks this reflection on “Cosmic Love” is kind of far off, Pope Francis quotes Pope St. John Paul II in *Laudato Si!*: “Yes, cosmic (!), because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always, in some

way, celebrated on the altar of the world...(and) creation is projected towards divinization (being made like God)...toward unification with the Creator himself." (*JPII Ecclesia de Eucharistia*).

This is all wonderful, but most of us live a simple life or look forward to a more simple life when sometimes it gets a little too hectic. "Cosmic Love" and "Cosmic Altars" can even seem like galaxies away and have nothing to do with our daily lives here on earth.

Or does it? With the James Webb Telescope satellite, we simple people do not even need a telescope, just a computer to log onto the NASA website and enjoy the wonders of the universe. With a little understanding of the cosmos we can enjoy creation beyond our little old rock called Earth, and dwell on God's immense universe that even challenges the faith of some of our present day cosmologists. How can such a God who has created such an immense universe really care about us here on planet earth? What is the connection to the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus?

Simply this, all the real-estate in the universe cannot love God back, only we humans created with a heart and soul can! Are we the only ones? It doesn't matter, since God will still love us anyway. There may be billions of other inhabitable planets with sentient life and God would still love them anyway, too. There are billions of people on this planet, and God still loves you and me anyway. One can see that mathematically the numbers can grow depending on one's imagination. It is not surprising that there are many cosmologists who do not believe in God, or at least a personal God. But that is changing, since the numbers are starting to add up to show that creation is beyond a chance creation, or a roll of the dice but by an Intelligent creator called God.

Having said that, let us embrace a personal God who loves you and me enough to even send his only begotten Son **"In A Fragile Wafer On Our Tongue!"**

I like to close with another fragment from the end of *Laudato Si!*

"The Son...united himself to this (planet) earth when he was formed in the womb of **Mary**. As his mother, she treasures the entire life of Jesus in her heart.

'Son of God, Jesus, you were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother, you became part of this earth...Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory...'
"(241, 246)

Despite this difficult teaching of Jesus, let us end with Joshua and say, "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."