

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 33)

ANTIPHON: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

LECTOR: I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise always on my lips; in the Lord my soul shall make its boast. The humble shall hear and be glad. **R.**

LECTOR: Glorify the Lord with me. Together let us praise his name. I sought the Lord and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free. **R.**

LECTOR: Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This poor man called; the Lord heard him and rescued him from all his distress. **R.**

LECTOR: The angel of the Lord is encamped around those who revere him, to rescue them. Taste and see that the Lord is good. He is happy who seeks refuge in him. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! I am the living bread from heaven, says the Lord; whoever eats this bread will live for ever. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

Or

The bread that I will give, says the Lord, is my flesh for the life of the world.

TODAY'S READINGS 1 Kings 19:4-8; Ephesians 4:30 - 5:2; John 6:41-51

NEXT WEEK (20th Sunday of Year B) Proverbs 9:1-6; Psalm 33; Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

*Yuletide cheer
with Majellan
Christmas cards*

Christmas cards

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*Opening
ourselves up to
God*



11 August 2024 19th Sunday Year B

Get yourself a life coach says an online ad and you can 'turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.' At some point in our lives, it may serve a purpose but contrast it with a local parish which decided to have a weekly meal for anyone who wished to come along.

On the first occasion they had nine guests and eleven helpers, and they responded to this potential embarrassment by everyone eating together. "It was coming together and a blessing I felt," said one of the organisers. We can see here how the ordinary stuff of our lives, eating together, can be the context for something quite unexpected to happen.

The life coach ad invites us to take control of our lives and make it happen, whereas in the parish setting, something else happened.

It relates to what we hear in the first reading. The prophet Elijah is in a dark place, alone and hungry, wanting to die. In the midst of his desolation, he is fed by an angel, and comes to understand God is present in what he's living through. In doing so he discovers a renewed purpose. The food he's given enables him to make the long journey to Mt Horeb (Sinai), the holy mountain, where God speaks to him. Desolation, the gift of food, the long journey – in the ordinariness of our lives, quite unexpectedly, we may come to discover the presence of God.

Again, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he speaks of our daily commitment to loving one another as Jesus loves us; learning to befriend

each other whatever our differences; avoiding the petty behaviours which bring us undone. Our learning to love in this way is enabled by the Holy Spirit, who reveals the unending love of the Father and Son. We're slowly learning to open ourselves to a God who loves us, come what may.

In the gospel, when Jesus says, "I am the bread from heaven," the authorities are shocked. They insist he's not from heaven, he's a local boy, we know his father. In other words, he's too ordinary. Then, amid their complaints, Jesus speaks of his divine origins and reminds us, this is God's initiative, to which we're invited to respond.

We're asked to let go of our securities and our prejudices and open ourselves to a bigger God, a loving God. A little like the moment at the parish meal when they decided to eat together. This is the God who draws us into Christ and into unending life, through our eating together with him. Jesus gives us his life and invites us to do the same – to give of our lives.

Before the parish meal, with everyone's agreement, they prayed, and concluded their prayer with these words: 'Thank you Lord for the blessings you have given us in our lives, especially one another. Amen.' Often, we may yearn for a special experience of God, only to miss the presence of God here, in our lives.

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