



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 4 AUGUST 2024 - TRINITY 10**

COLLECT

Let your merciful ears, O Lord,
be open to the prayers of your humble servants;
and that they may obtain their petitions
make them to ask such things as shall please you;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 78 (vv 23-29)

- 23 So he commanded the clouds above ♦
and opened the doors of heaven.
- 24 He rained down upon them manna to eat ♦
and gave them the grain of heaven.
- 25 So mortals ate the bread of angels; ♦
he sent them food in plenty.
- 26 He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens ♦
and led out the south wind by his might.
- 27 He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust ♦
and winged fowl like the sand of the sea.
- 28 He let it fall in the midst of their camp ♦
and round about their tents.
- 29 So they ate and were well filled, ♦
for he gave them what they desired.

A reading from the book of the Exodus Chapter 16, verses 2-4 and 9 to 15.

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.'

Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, "Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining." ' And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, 'I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, "At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God." '

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. *Exodus 16.2-4, 9-15.*

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is from John, chapter 6, verses 24-35.

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel and it is introduced with an Acclamation, as below:

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

I am the bread of life, says the Lord. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. **Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 6, verses 24-35.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

John 6.24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

A Reflection from Peter...

For nearly fifty years the community at Mirfield has been twinned with a Benedictine monastery in Germany, the Abbey of St Matthias in Trier. Each year we would have an exchange visit – either brothers from Mirfield going to Germany or the other way around. Of course, we took keen interest in the way that each community did things. We were struck, for instance, by the way that supper was the same every day in St Matthias: bread, with plates of sliced cheese, washed down with mint tea. They were equally struck by the fact that we might have baked beans on toast one day, and sardines and salad the next... The odd thing is that you quickly get used to things and stop noticing what might seem strange to other people – but you don't stop getting bored! And getting bored doesn't seem to have much to do with repetition or variety: you can get bored with change as much as with no change. Today's Gospel focuses on food – but in a rather particular way. Jesus speaks of the bread of God that gives life to the world. He says, "I am the bread of life." And the people say, "Sir give us this bread always!" This all sounds wonderful. But there is a warning note. The people talking to Jesus remember that their ancestors had eaten manna in the wilderness, the food that God provided on the long trek through the wilderness. And we remember what happened. At first, the people were excited and grateful. But, as the days went on and it was nothing but manna, they got fed up and complained, "Why do you give us this worthless bread to eat?" You might also remember Edmund in "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". When he falls into the hands of the White Witch she promises him an endless supply of Turkish delight – his favourite – but he quickly discovers that having it all the time takes away the pleasure...

What does this tell us? First, that we must be wary of our own tendency to get bored or to think it's time for something new. But more importantly, we have to learn anew what it means to trust God's promises. Jesus said to the people that the bread of God gives life to the world. They were rightly excited and said, "Sir, give us this bread always!" As we celebrate the Eucharist together we are sharing in the bread of God, the life of the world. It doesn't stop us feeling moments of boredom and desiring something different. But nor does it stop God going on giving us the bread of life. Pray then that we too may simply and honestly say, "Sir, give us this bread always."