

# FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!

In continuing the thread from last Sunday's reading, after Jesus fed the multitude, St. John begins what scripture scholars call the Eucharistic discourse, the thematic teaching of what we Catholics believe to be the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. These readings increase our trust in the providence of a loving and caring God engendering a greater hunger and thirst for the bread of eternal life – the Holy Eucharist.

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these hungry souls in the desert with the manna and quail. In the Second Reading, St. Paul continues to advise the early Christians in Ephesus that they need to turn away from their former worldly selves and as in their baptism, '*put on the new self*' as a renewal in the spirit.

In the Gospel, Jesus begins the Bread of Life discourse with His uniquely bold claim: "*I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.*" Jesus indeed offers the crowd physical bread but at the same time offers Himself as that eternal and lasting food from Heaven, the very sacrifice that would bring salvation to completion. Many were happy with the physical feeding, but others experienced increased hostility towards Jesus renewing an intention to kill him.

We all deeply need to nurture ourselves with daily spiritual readings, reciting, and praying to our Lord. In the Holy Mass, the Church offers us two remedies for nourishment: The Bread of Life contained in the Liturgy of the Word that comes from the mouth of God, and the Bread of Life quietly and mysteriously contained in the Holy Eucharist, the unbloodied sacrifice on Calvary. Let us nourish our souls with this heavenly manna and carry Jesus into our homes and workplaces, glorifying His love, mercy, and compassion all around us, and in many little ways, giving ourselves over to the needs of our brothers and sisters.

In honoring God's gifts of spiritual life and strength, we can properly prepare to receive the Most Holy Eucharist. Observing a fast before Receiving, maintaining modesty in our dress and gestures, and a thoughtful examination of conscience all keep us faithful to this sacrament. Through Holy Communion, our Catechism teaches how partaking '*preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism.*' This was a moment in all of our lives when we first became united with Christ, and do we not all burn with fire in our hearts to recover that?

— Joyous Sunday!