

Lessons for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 12, 2018

Psalm 34:1–8 ~ *David's praise and thanks to God for deliverance from his enemies.*

1 Kings 19:1–8 ~ *At the end of his road, Elijah received bread, water, and marching orders from God.*

Ephesians 4:17—5:2 ~ *Christ has rescued us from a futile life without God, and given us a new life to live.*

John 6:35–51 ~ *Jesus, the Bread of Life, came from the Father and gave His flesh for the life of the world.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Something to Live For

Elijah was hounded by Queen Jezebel until he was ready to die, but God miraculously provided food for Elijah that carried him on to the next job God had for him to do. In our new life in Christ we sometimes get discouraged because it is impossible to be faithful imitators of God as St. Paul charges us to be. Only when we are fed the spiritual food of Christ himself, the Bread of Life, can we have the energy to go on to the next task God has in mind for us.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: O Lord, sometimes I am so discouraged that I am ready to give up on myself and my friends. Remind me that I can always trust You in the days ahead. Strengthen me in Christ my Savior to face the next task. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: In Christ, we live new lives, not taking everything we can for ourselves, but always eager to share what we have with those in need; not wrapped up in the discouraging circumstances of our own life, but ready to strengthen our bodies for the journey before us, just as Christ gave His life that we may live for God.

OFFERING PRAYER: O Lord, you gave Elijah, path and purpose for his life;
Now show us what we are to do to live each day for you.
You give us means and will to share the burden and the strife
our sisters and our brothers bear in love and mercy true. Amen.

Lord, when Elijah thought there was no reason to go on, You showed Him Your purpose in his life. Show us what You would have us do, and give us the means and the will to do it. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Hearing St Paul's injunction, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you," we might very readily become discouraged in living a faithful, Christian life. Like Elijah, we might lose hope and declare, "It is enough; take away my life!" In Christ, God nourishes the faith He has created through the very strength of the Bread from heaven, given that we may receive Life from the One who gave Himself in body and blood, living bread for the life of the world