

**TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**August 16, 2009**

**Gospel: (John 6: 51-58)**

Jesus said to the crowds: *“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”* The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, *“How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”* Jesus said to them, *“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.”*

**Reflection:**

Jesus’ invitation in giving us his flesh and blood to eat and drink is an invitation to enter into his own self-giving. Eucharist is self-giving. We can be self-giving like Jesus because through the Eucharist, the body of Christ, we become Jesus. This is why we can “remain” in Jesus—we are transformed by what we eat. Our relationship to Jesus, then becomes a relationship of indwelling, of divine life. Eucharist is both gift given and invitation to our self-giving. The mystery of Eucharist strengthens us for our daily dying and rising, our daily giving of ourselves for the sake of others so that we all might share more abundantly in divine life. (Living Liturgy, p.192)

**Vincentian Meditation:**

Like so many of God’s graces and blessings, which we receive from Him daily, we take them too easily as something as ordinary as the light of day. The challenge for all of us, who have the joy and privilege of receiving Communion, weekly or even daily, is to keep in our souls a sense of wonder that the Bread of Life which we eat is the same as was distributed by Our Lord to his apostles at the Last Supper. The Last Supper is going on still. Just before we receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion, the Church reminds us that we are happy to be called to the table of the Lord. “Happy are those who are called to His supper,” for at this supper it is no ordinary bread. As we receive the host, Jesus Christ is saying to each one of us in particular: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.” (McCullen, Deep Down Things, p. 168)

**Discussion:** *(Share your thoughts after a moment of silence)*

**How do you keep a “sense of wonder” for the gift of Holy Communion?**

**Closing Prayer:**

Jesus, you are the bread that fills the longing of our hearts,  
**-may this bread deepen our longing for justice.**  
Jesus, you are the wine that satisfies our thirst for holiness,  
**-may this wine deepen our thirst for peace. Amen.**

