

Lent IV

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Date: 14 March 2021

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[0 : 00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Our Gospel text is the familiar story of Jesus feeding a massive crowd after they had spent many hours listening to his teaching.

The crowd contained people interested in what our Lord had to say after the news had spread of his many miracles. But our Gospel text is not merely about Jesus feeding a large group of hungry people.

As a matter of fact, the feeding recorded here in John chapter 6 is no more about food than the account of the fall of humanity recorded in Genesis chapter 3.

Both accounts speak of food, but both have a much deeper meaning. The significance behind these two events, the fall and the feeding of the 5,000, provide important insight into our Lord's ministry as he is the bread of life.

He is the antidote for sin. And he has come for a world that is spiritually malnourished and starving. In Genesis chapter 3, we read about the story of humanity falling into sin because of rebellion against God.

[1 : 29] The temptation and fall of Genesis chapter 3 is about the fall of humanity, the fall of human beings seeking to be free from their God, free from their Creator.

It's about human beings wanting to be free from our Lord's commands, our Lord's word, free from any accountability, so that we now replace the word of God and we exalt ourselves.

Hubris and pride is at the very heart of all sin. It was the ancient Greek philosopher Protagoras, going all the way back some 400 years in 400 BC, who proudly proclaimed, man is the measure of all things.

Again, Protagoras said, man is the measure of all things. And this is the creed for atheism, agnosticism, cynicism, and complete skepticism.

This is the creed for utopian Marxism, radical feminism, and complete chauvinism in all of its various stripes.

[2 : 49] This is the creed that creates the racial tensions, the sexual revolutions, and the savagery that flows from a nihilistic worldview that exalts meaninglessness and despair.

This is the creed used for the agenda, for the mass social engineering and conformity of all. And this is what we are experiencing right before our very own eyes in this country.

It is a complete rebellion against God, against his word. But Jesus brings an alternative to this false creed of man being the measure of all things and its savage destruction.

Instead of relying on human beings who often pervert the good in order to profit at all costs, an example of this would be like the unthinkable and inhumane sex trafficking industry, which is bankrolled by wealthy degenerates.

Jesus comes providing meaning and life to a starving people. He provides life for those tired of the bitter power struggles and the personal agendas of a self-serving world.

[4 : 15] Our Lord provides life to all who acknowledge their waywardness and seek him rather than putting trust in self.

Our Lord provides life by giving the greatest gift to human beings and that gift is himself. The word of God has come in human flesh in order to dwell in us.

Jesus is the bread of life. Our Lord came to satisfy the real longing of every human heart. Our Lord came for those tired of being pawns for a savage world full of despair.

And that's what our gospel text is all about this morning. It's about God feeding hungry and starving people because Jesus is the bread of life.

He is the one who gives life. He's the one who has come to dwell with us and in us. Jesus looks out on a hungry people, a people who are desperate.

[5 : 28] And he speaks from a mountain demonstrating that he is the final prophetic voice. He is the one greater even than the great Moses. He provides bread and abundance for these people who were like sheep without a shepherd aimlessly living under Roman rule.

And what he is teaching and portraying to these hungry souls and to all of us is that man does not live by bread alone but by the very word of God that comes from God because he is life and salvation.

Jesus is that word that is now come in human flesh. And yes, the very weapon that our Lord used to combat the temptations of the devil in the wilderness was saying it is written.

It is written. It is written. The word of God. And it takes us back to the first Sunday in Lent from our gospel reading there of Matthew chapter 4.

And Jesus is now offering this bread of life. Jesus is the word of God made flesh and only he, only he can satisfy the longing of the heart.

[6 : 53] Jesus the God in human flesh is the only, the only hope for the world. and this word of God now stands in our midst even here this morning offering his life, offering meaning to all who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Friends, Satan seeks to mimic the truth by offering us a different kind of food just like he did with Adam and Eve in the garden.

He puts in front of our face self-law, autonomy. He tells us to indulge our every desire. But in the end we do not gain some grand utopia.

no, we inherit pain, broken relationships, complete devastation, and an existence of shame that leads to suffering and ultimately to death.

That's what Satan is luring the world and captivating the world with. He seeks to slowly poison us.

[8 : 09] And that's why St. Peter warns in 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 8, be sober, be vigilant. Why? Because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

But Jesus offers an alternative. He offers truth because he offers himself. And though the journey is difficult, it feels lonely, we feel like aliens, our Lord gives us himself in this Holy Eucharist, which foreshadowed the massive feeding we heard from John chapter 6.

And we are to seek to continue to feed on him, to conform ourselves to the written word of God, the scriptures, where we encounter the word made flesh, and now to receive this word made flesh in the Holy Eucharist.

And like our Lord, when we are tempted, we say, it is written. We go back to the scriptures.

We follow God rather than feeding on the poison of this world, the flesh, and ultimately the devil. beloved, we are called to turn away from the falsehoods and the enticements put in front of our faces because behind the veil, behind the veil of this world is nothing but death.

[9 : 53] But in Jesus Christ, we have been given life, and we are now to strive to become what we partake of, the precious body of Christ.

We are then called to share this life of Jesus with a world, a world that is lost, malnourished, starving, a world that lacks true meaning, lacks true love.

Friends, the bread of life has come from heaven in the person of Jesus who is Lord over all. and our Lord desires to feed you this morning so that you not only receive his life, but that his life might fill you up by the power of the Holy Spirit, and then it might spill out to this starving world.

Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Ghost. Amen.