



21st SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME **YEAR B – August 26, 2018**

Our Gospel reading today (JOHN 6:60-69) picks up where last week's Gospel ended. Jesus has just told the people that he would give them his body and blood as real food and real drink. Many who heard him speaking said, "This is a hard saying. Who can accept it." And as we know many of his disciples walked away.

Jesus says to us today what he said to the 12 apostles on that occasion. Do you want to leave me too? Like Simon Peter, we too can respond, "Lord to whom shall we go. You have the words of everlasting life."

In the first reading today (JOSHUA 24:1-2A, 15-17, 18B), Joshua addresses the people of his time and challenges them with these words, "If it does not please you to serve the Lord, decide today whom you will serve. Will you serve false gods? Will you serve human masters? Will you serve yourself?" Each of us must answer those questions too.

In our culture today, there are all kinds of false gods who are presented to us with the promise of power, the promise of pleasure, the promise of wealth; even the promise of the Gospel of prosperity.

Recall one of our Lords hard sayings, "I came to serve not to be served and if you want to be the greatest in God's kingdom, you must be the servant of all." Living that hard saying is not easy.

I'm reminded of a poem that Deacon Bernie shared with us when he learned that he needed a heart transplant. It compares our commitment to Jesus and his work, to two people riding a tandem bicycle. The poem goes something like this:

*At first, I sat in front, Jesus in the rear. I
couldn't see him, but I knew he was there. I
could feel his help when the road got steep.*

*Then one day Jesus changed seats with me.
Suddenly everything went topsy turvy.*

*When I was in control
the ride was predictable - even boring
but when Jesus took over, it got wild
I could hardly hold on.*

"This is madness" - I cried out!

*But Jesus just smiled - and said – Pedal. And
so I learned to shut up and pedal and trust my
bike companion.*

*Oh, there are still times when I get scared and
I'm ready to give up
But then Jesus turns around, touches my
hand, smiles and says, - just pedal.*

For a few moments in silence, reflect on “Your Journey with Jesus”. Is he on the front of your bike or on the back?

