



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE CATHOLIC CHURCH

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
AUGUST 25, 2024

Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Bread of Life – Our Call to Serve

Jesus then said to the Twelve, “Do you also want to leave?” Simon Peter answered him, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”

John 6:67–69

There is an ever-widening division among Jesus’ disciples throughout the Gospels between those who accept that Jesus truly is the Messiah and those who do not. Great crowds follow him and are amazed at his teaching, at the miracle of the five loaves, at his healing of the sick, and his ability to confound the authorities. Ultimately, all abandon him at the foot of the cross, other than the Blessed Mother, several women, and the young St. John.

In this final scene of Jesus’ Bread of Life discourse in St. John’s Gospel which we have been hearing proclaimed and reflecting upon for the past four weeks, Jesus puts the bottom-line question to the Twelve: *Do you also want to leave?* Simon Peter’s consummate profession of faith begs the question for each of us. Are we likewise willing to declare: *Lord, we have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God?* Do we accept that following Christ is the only path to eternal life?

Our Commitment as Disciples

Many who had been following Jesus at that time found this teaching to consume his body and blood hard to believe and left him. How is it for us? Are we willing to commit to a personal relationship with the Lord in daily prayer and participation in the sacraments that he might sow in our hearts a deeper understanding of his true and real presence? Do we accept our call to serve in response to his presence? Is it law or love that defines our relationship with Christ and motivates our hearts? Furthermore, how do our daily actions live out that belief?

We Will Serve the Lord

In our first reading, Joshua gathers all the tribes of Israel and puts the question to them: *Decide today whom you will serve!*

(Joshua 24:1) The Holy Eucharist, the Bread of Life requires a commitment to love and serve. It is our gateway to eternal life.

Our parish community offers a variety internal and outreach opportunities to serve. Last week, I described ways adults could assist in passing on the faith to the next generations

through our catechetical and youth ministries. These are critical to the life of the church and essential to our parish community. But young people don’t just represent a “future” church, they are members NOW and are also called to serve.

Parish Outreach Ministries. Several years ago, we established our **Mercy Teams** outreach as a simple way that individuals, couples, and especially families could regularly get involved in serving others—especially those in need of food and shelter. Our initial

commitment to Street Ministry once a month grew during the pandemic into the Sack Lunch Meals of Mercy when other agencies couldn’t maintain meal programs. There still is a great need to feed those on the streets, and others who are food insecure in their homes—the outreach of our **St. Vincent de Paul** food drives which supply our own and other local food distribution centers.

Every Sunday we need people to help staff our **Sunday hospitality** after the Masses. This is another great way for families or couples to serve as you welcome other parishioners and our visitors. Our **Funeral Luncheon** ministry provides a great service to grieving families and regularly needs new volunteers to serve.

May we be ready to declare: *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* (Joshua 24:15)

—Tom Tomaszek, Pastoral Associate

