

August 8, 2021

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kgs 19:4-8

Eph 4:30—5:2

Jn 6:41-51

GROW: We have apps that monitor our sleep and calories, and remind us to get our steps in. Short on time? We order takeout or subscribe to a meal service. Yet, despite these modern conveniences, I would guess that most of us don't sleep enough or consistently eat well. And we pay the price, whether in the short or long term. Enter Elijah, who had reached his limit physically and mentally. Yet after an angel provided him food and drink, Elijah found the strength to walk 40 days and 40 nights. Impressive! But that's God for us! And in the provision of his Son, we have food and drink – bread from heaven – that not only sustains us for our journey on earth but offers the possibility of eternal life. This is our belief; this is what Jesus says to us. And that alone can give us strength, and hope, even when we're having an "Elijah" moment. For at each and every holy Mass, Jesus invites us to the table, offering us food that not only sustains but also transforms us. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, indeed!

GO: Just as a good night's sleep and proper nutrition help us function our best, the Word of God and the Eucharist, and our communal life of faith, provide the spiritual nourishment we need as we strive to be *imitators of God* in our daily lives, as Saint Paul says. As we partake of Christ in the Eucharist, perhaps we can say a prayer of thanksgiving and ask Jesus to help us grow in the ways of love that Paul outlined: kindness, compassion, and forgiveness toward the people we encounter. It could mean letting go of a grudge, becoming more conscious of the needs of others, listening respectfully to someone with whom we disagree, or perhaps forgiving ourselves. The Holy Spirit will guide us.

REFLECT: Think about the ways the Mass transforms you. It may be something subtle – the spirit of consolation and the feeling that things are right in your world – or you may have been particularly moved by the readings, homily, music, or silent prayer. Tell someone about it!