

### Why are you looking for Jesus?

Beloved brothers and sisters, today we gather to celebrate the love of God our father, whose care for us surpasses all our longings.

In the days gone, as is revealed in the Book of Exodus 16:12-15, our parents in faith were surprised by God's caring and goodness. The question manna, which in Egyptian language means "what is it?" was not a question about the unknown food, but it also concerned the unmerited goodness of God. God did not only give them food, He also gave them His goodness. That same goodness which the Israelites consumed in the hope of temporary survival, the Father in his goodness has granted to us as food of eternal life. In Christ Jesus, we partake of the bread of life and the drink of eternal salvation. We are not shrouded in the confusion of his person. We know him, not just as the son of Mary and Joseph, but more as the Christ, our Jesus, our way and life, our only door to the Father. He is our salvation.

The gospel story of today is about the people Jesus fed in last week's gospel who are now searching for Him. But why were they searching for him? Why did they travel by plains, hills and seas to see him? The scriptures say that the Greeks were in search of wisdom; the Jews were in search of signs. These commoners, what are they searching for in Jesus?

I think their needs then were not different from that of our needs today. So what are we searching for when we come to worship, sacrifice and celebrate at Mass? I think we long for temporary and spiritual friendship with humanity and God. We long for love, for healing, for deliverance, for health and happiness, for understanding, for knowledge, for peace. We long for power, justice and security. In fact, we are looking for food, we want to be fed. We believe that these can only be truly found in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, our brother.

In depth, the manner upon which we seek these bearers of life and to the point which we are satisfied with them, becomes the foundation of our love, hope, joy, frustration, fear and despair.

This point is where the invitation of Jesus, "Come to me all you who labor and thirst and I will give you rest", is not only relevant but very assuring. But, do you know that the nature of our relationship with Jesus is the first conditioning factor for what we look for in life and how we search for it? If we accept Jesus, then we have found life and have access to its providence. As Manna satisfied the hunger of Israelites in the desert, and water from the rock quenched their thirst, so Jesus satisfies both our temporary and spiritual needs with an offer to eternal life itself.

The question still stands: **Why are you looking for Jesus?** The Lord wants us to accomplish the work of the Father so that he may give us the food which endures for eternal life. His promise is very assuring: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." John 6:35.

May Jesus, the bread of life, strengthen us unto eternal joy.

Amen.