

Formed in Prayer

*Let us be still
and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us*

*Dear Father,
Be with us as we pray.
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.
Send your Holy Spirit
to inspire and sustain us in our mission.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Gospel

John 6:60-69

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, ‘This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?’ Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, ‘Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?’ ‘It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. ‘But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, ‘This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.’ After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘What about you, do you want to go away too?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.’

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday’s Gospel reading?
What might God be saying to you in and through the Gospel?*

Reflection

Some leaders will go to all sorts of lengths to sugar coat, redirect or deflect an unpopular decision that will be hard to accept. Inevitably, leaders must choose which way to go and we can see that Jesus’s disciples voted with their feet when it came to his teaching about the Eucharist (John 6:25-59). Some disciples were simply unable to accept that he truly was the ‘bread of life’, but despite this rejection, Jesus held firm. No matter how difficult the teaching, he didn’t make room for fence sitting.

Answering Jesus’s question about leaving, Simon Peter asks, “To whom shall we go?” Having come to know and believe in Jesus, Simon Peter couldn’t imagine finding such peace and joy anywhere else. Knowing and believing are fundamental aspects of any trusting relationship and this is fundamental to authentic Catholic leadership. We should consider how strongly the vision we propose is known and believed. A rejection of our leadership can be challenging, but if we truly cooperate with the Holy Spirit, then we must accept that our leadership is about trust, not popularity, and humbly place our faith in God. Do your actions reflect a decision to wholeheartedly seek the bread of life? (*Nathan Ahearne, Marist Mission and Life Formation*)

Dear Lord

Give me the strength to move towards you when I find my own actions contradict yours.
Send the Holy Spirit to encourage my faithfulness and fidelity as a leader in your name,
especially when others turn away from you.
Let my words be full of the Spirit and life.
Amen