



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 18 August 2024

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today, the Gospel tells us about Jesus, who says, very simply: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven” (*Jn* 6:51). Before the crowd, the Son of God identifies himself with the most common and ordinary food — bread: “I am the bread”. Among those who are listening to him, some start arguing among themselves (cf. v. 52): how can Jesus give us his own flesh to eat? Even we today ask ourselves this question, but with wonder and gratitude. Here are two attitudes on which to reflect: wonder and gratitude before the miracle of the Eucharist.

First: *wonder*, because Jesus’ words surprise us. But Jesus always surprises us, always. Also today, in the lives of each one of us, Jesus keeps surprising us. The bread from heaven is a gift that exceeds all expectations. Those who do not grasp Jesus’ way remain suspicious: it seems impossible, even inhuman, to eat the flesh of another (cf. v. 54). Flesh and blood, however, are the humanity of the Saviour, his very life offered as a nourishment for our own.

And this brings us to the second attitude: *gratitude*. First: *wonder*. Now, *gratitude*, because we recognize Jesus where he makes himself present for us and with us. He makes himself bread for us. “Whoever eats my flesh remains in me and I in him” (cf. v. 56). Christ, true man, knows well that one must eat to live. But he also knows that this is not enough. After multiplying the earthly bread (cf. *Jn* 6:1-14), he prepares an even greater gift: he himself becomes true food and true drink (cf. v. 55). Thank you, Lord Jesus! Let us say, “Thank you, thank you”, with our heart.

The heavenly bread, which comes from the Father, is the Son himself made flesh for us. This food is more than necessary because it satisfies the hunger for hope, the hunger for truth and the hunger for salvation that we all feel not in our stomachs, but in our hearts. Every one of us needs the Eucharist!

Jesus takes care of the greatest need: he saves us, nourishing our lives with his own, and he will do this forever. And it is thanks to him that we can live in communion with God and with each other. The living and true bread is not, therefore, something magical, no. It is not something that will immediately solve all problems, but it is the very Body of Christ, that gives hope to the poor and overcomes the arrogance of those who gorge themselves at their expense.

Let us ask ourselves, then, brothers and sisters: Do I hunger and thirst for salvation, not just for myself, but for all my brothers and sisters? When I receive the Eucharist, which is the miracle of mercy, do I stand in awe before the Body of the Lord, who died and rose again for us?

Let us pray together to the Virgin Mary, that she may help us to welcome the gift of heaven in this sign of the bread.

After praying the Angelus the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters! Today, in Uvira, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Italian missionaries of Saint Francis Xavier, Luigi Carrara, Giovanni Didoné, and Vittorio Faccin, along with Albert Joubert, a Congolese priest, were beatified. They were killed in that country on 28 November 1964. Their martyrdom crowned a life spent for the Lord and for their brothers and sisters. May their example and intercession foster paths of reconciliation and peace for the good of the Congolese people. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

And let us continue to pray that paths of peace may be opened in the Middle East — Palestine, Israel — as well as in martyred Ukraine, Myanmar, and every war-torn region, through dialogue and negotiation, refraining from violent actions and reactions.

I greet all of you, dear faithful of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and various countries. In particular, I greet those from the state of São Paulo in Brazil; and also the Sisters of Saint Elizabeth.

I send my greetings and blessings to the women and girls gathered at the Marian Shrine of Piekary Śląskie in Poland, and I encourage them to witness the Gospel joyfully in their families and society. And I greet the young people of the *Immacolata*.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and

arrivederci!

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