

19th Sunday Ordinary Time

Today's readings focus on origins. Roots tend to condition our way of thinking and acting.

In the first reading, Elijah has clashed with Jezebel, the Israelite queen. With the defeat of her pagan prophets by Elijah, she is determined to do away with him. Elijah chooses to flee to his roots on Mt. Horeb (Sinai). God provides food for him as He did for the Israelites in the desert. He walks 40 days and 40 nights, as Moses spent on Mt. Sinai. Elijah entered into the experience of his ancestors. It encourages him to speak boldly on behalf of God. It is a question of roots.

In the second reading, Paul offers a Christian way of life based on God's action in Jesus. An injury to neighbor is an injury to the Holy Spirit. Forgiveness as in kindness and compassion is suggested "as God in Christ has forgiven you. He recommends love. ". . . be imitators of God,. . . live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us." Since Christians identify with the trinity, they must act in a way that reflects this. It is a question of roots.

In the Gospel, John further develops the multiplication of loaves and fishes. Bread is the symbol of Christ, who like bread, will sustain life in all who approach him in faith. To his audience, it is a matter of origins. He is human, Joseph's son. For Jesus it is also a matter of origins. He is the manifestation of the Father. To acknowledge Jesus as living bread is to see him as the ultimate expression of the Father's love in his death-glorification