

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**The Bread of Life**    Third Week of Easter    Tuesday, May 7, 2019    Acts 7:51—8:1a;  
**Jn 6:30-35**    (Jesus means to slake our hunger so that we will be able to live in a true sense of peace and tranquility and serenity comfortable even in our yet to be perfected selves.)

**“Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life.”**

Among the various Christian churches there are certain notable distinctions. One is that the **Fourth Gospel**, which we call the Gospel according to John, which is attributed to the beloved disciple, **is central to the teaching tradition of the Catholic faith.** Our sacramental theology and our Christology, that means our theology of Christ, is based primarily on the Fourth Gospel, **and the other three are supplemental.**

Now in the tradition as it has turned out, in the tradition of rational theology, liberal Protestantism as it's called, it's the opposite. They take the synoptic gospels as gospel, John not so much. Now the first three are very similar. Both Matthew and Luke are based basically on Mark; they are very similar. John is different. And what gives the Catholic Church and the Catholic teaching its particular flavor is the way in which John serves as a matrix.

Here you have the theme of the bread of life. Now **to regard Jesus as the bread of life feeds directly into a very realistic understanding of Eucharist as the presence of the risen Christ.** If you take the expression “I am the bread of life” in the merely figurative sense, well then the Eucharist becomes merely figurative; and this is actually what has happened historically. So we want to try to dwell on the reality of Christ as presented here as not only being in the Church, not only being the bread of life, but **actually feeding in a dynamic sense so that “whoever comes to me will never hunger.”** Now of course this does not mean hunger in the purely physical sense, but it's not merely figurative either. It means really that Jesus means to satisfy our hunger and to fill us so that gnawing sense of something missing will be remedied and **we will be able to live in a true sense of peace and tranquility and serenity**, not in a state of being completely fulfilled, not in a state of being perfected, but in a state of being serenely on the way and **comfortable even in our yet to be perfected selves.** I believe this is the basic intent of this reading.