

## WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

<b>Readings:</b>	Jos 24: 1-2, 15-18 Psalm 34: 2-3, 16-23 Ephesians 5: 21-32 John 6: 60-69	21 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time August 23, 2009
------------------	---	---

**Word:** Jesus, the Living Bread, leads us to eternal life.

**Theme:** Jesus leads us to eternal life when we believe that His words are spirit and life. [Faith]

**Promise:** *“The Lord redeems the lives of his servants; no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him.”* (Ps 34:23)

### Reflection:

Daily decisions are a part of life: how to dress, what to eat, when to go to bed. In these matters our decisions are constantly changing, but we have some decisions which by their nature should be permanent. These are fundamental choices which we make by our own free will, of which an excellent example is our decision to marry. Marriage according to the Word of God is a covenant, a permanent, loving relationship of fidelity in which a man and a woman become one.

God invited His people of the Old Testament to become His partner in a covenant which was a spiritual form of marriage. Joshua, the leader of God's people after the death of Moses, understood the importance of this covenant. He challenged the people: ***“if it does not please you to serve the Lord, decide today whom you will serve.... As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”*** Joshua had made his decision.

Centuries later, Jesus confronted those who had heard him preach. He challenged them to make a decision about himself. He had proclaimed a doctrine which they clearly understood. ***“The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have life everlasting and I will raise them up on the last day.”*** They understood Jesus so clearly that they objected. “This sort of talk is hard to endure” How can anyone take it seriously?”

But that they take it seriously is exactly what Jesus demanded. When his objectors turned their backs on him to walk away, he let them go. It was the day of decision. It was not possible to profess faith in Jesus and at the same time to reject his promise of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus then challenged those closest to him, the Twelve: ***“Do you want to leave me too?”*** Peter in an affirmation of loyalty and faith that has been repeated through the ages by men and women of faith, declared, ***“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe; we are convinced that you are God's holy one.”***

Peter's profession of faith was not forced upon him. He had received a grace which was not unlike a proposal of marriage. To this grace he freely responded. He had made a decision to bind himself so closely to Christ that, despite his momentary lapse later on, he would be of one mind in faith with Christ. In effect he said that he wanted to enter into a permanent, loving relationship of fidelity with Christ.

We have the same grace which means we have the same challenge, the same decision to make. Christ made faith in the Eucharist the ultimate test of faith in Himself. Appropriately, the Eucharist is the sacrament of the new and everlasting covenant. To embrace the Eucharist and to make the celebration of this sacrament the center and heart of our lives is to live out the permanent, loving relationship which makes Christ and ourselves two in one flesh.

**Prayer:**

*Father God, You so loved the world that You gave your only Son, to die for our sins, and we accept this reality with all our hearts and all of our minds. Help us also to accept and believe, for our sake and continuing salvation, that the Holy Eucharist which we partake in our celebration of the Holy Mass is truly Your Body and Blood, broken to save, heal and remind us always of Your love for each of us. Thank You Lord Jesus. May we grow holy and charitable with our fellowmen to be worthy of your body and blood, our "Bread of life". Amen!*

**Suggested Personal Reflection:**

1. Why do you believe in the Eucharist?
2. Why do you value this wonderful sacrament?
3. Why is the Mass the highest expression of our Catholic devotion?

**Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:**

August 24, 2009 (Mon):	Rv 21: 9-14; Ps 145: 10-13, 17-18; Jn 1: 45-51
August 25, 2009 (Tue):	1 Thes 2: 1-8; Ps 139: 1-6; Mt 23: 23-26
August 26, 2009 (Wed):	1 Thes 2: 9-13; Ps 139: 7-12; Mt 23: 27-32
August 27, 2009 (Thur):	1 Thes 3: 7-13; Ps 90: 3-4, 12-14, 17; Mt 24: 42-51 or Lk 7: 11-17
August 28, 2009 (Fri):	1 Thes 4: 1-8 or 1 Jn 4: 7-16; Ps 97: 1-2, 5-6, 10-12; Mt 25: 1-13 or Mt 23: 8-12
August 29, 2009 (Sat):	Jer 1; 17-19; Ps 71: 1-6, 15-17; Mk 6: 17-29

***"Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!"***