

BEHOLD THE LAMB: SESSION 7

The Bread of Life

John 6: A Catholic Journey Through the Gospel of John

Part 1: Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim: Participants discover that John 6 moves in two movements, from bread received by faith to flesh given as food, and that at the exact moment the crowd asks how can this man give us his flesh to eat, Jesus breaks his own lifelong pattern: instead of correcting the literal reading, he intensifies it, swears to it, coarsens the verb, and lets disciples walk away over it. They finish the night standing where the Twelve stood, holding Peter's answer: Lord, to whom shall we go?

Catholic Touchstone: The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, true, real, and substantial (CCC 1374), and the Mass as the source and summit of the Christian life (CCC 1324). Tonight is why this study exists. Everything the group has traced, the tent, the temple of his body, the wedding wine, the living water, converges on an altar.

What You Need to Know

Begin with the timestamp, because John placed it like a signature: now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand (6:4). Nothing in the narrative requires the note; the feeding happens in Galilee, nowhere near Jerusalem. John dates the entire chapter to Passover because the discourse it contains is Passover theology, bread, flesh, blood, and a death for the life of the world. This is the second of the Gospel's three Passovers, and your sealed guesses are compounding interest tonight at a furious rate. One key you must carry alone until Session 13: the Passover lamb of Exodus 12 was not only slain. The command was, they shall eat the flesh (Exodus 12:8). A Passover sacrifice you did not eat was a Passover you did not keep. Say nothing; but understand why John put this discourse at this feast.

The feeding of the five thousand (6:1-15) is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels, and John's telling drips with liturgical vocabulary: Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, *eucharistēsas*, he distributed them (6:11); afterward the fragments, *klasmata*, are gathered up that nothing may be lost, and *klasmata* is the very word the earliest Christians used for the Eucharistic fragments in their liturgies. The barley loaves point backward too: Elisha once fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves, with the promise they shall eat and have some left (2 Kings 4:42-44), a live discovery your group will enjoy, and Jesus outruns the prophet by orders of magnitude: five loaves, five thousand men, twelve baskets over. The crowd draws the right conclusion with the wrong ambition: this is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world, Deuteronomy 18 again, and they move to make him king by force. He withdraws alone. He has not come to be that kind of king, and the difference between the kingship they want and the kingship he brings is, in a sense, the whole chapter.

The sea crossing (6:16-21) is brief and enormous. In the dark, against the wind, the disciples see Jesus walking on the sea, and his word to them is *egō eimi*, it is I, I AM, do not be afraid. Job says of God that He alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea (Job 9:8), and the psalmist sings to God, thy way was through the sea... yet thy footprints were unseen (Psalm 77:19). Someone's

footprints have now been seen. The I AM line on your board takes its second entry, and this one is spoken from on top of the water. Log Signs 4 and 5 in one night.

The discourse (6:22-58) is best taught in its two movements, the division Catholic tradition hears at verse 51, and the honesty of tonight's steelman depends on your keeping them distinct. Movement one, 6:26-50: the crowd that ate wants breakfast again (you seek me... because you ate your fill of the loaves, the sign-faith thread at its bluntest), demands manna credentials, and Jesus declares, I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst (6:35). This is the first of the great predicate I AM sayings, and in this movement, coming and believing really are the eating and drinking: the bread is Christ himself received by faith. Grant that fully and teach it fully; Catholics lose nothing here, for faith is the door of every sacrament. Note too the murmuring (6:41, *gongyzō*), the same grumbling root as the wilderness generation grumbling about the first manna, and the grim reminder: your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died (6:49).

Movement two begins at 6:51 with a turn of tense and substance: the bread which I shall give, future, is my flesh, for the life of the world, sacrificial. From here the vocabulary changes ecosystem: flesh, blood, eat, drink, food indeed, drink indeed. The Jews dispute among themselves, how can this man give us his flesh to eat, a literal reading, and here is the hinge your whole press turns on: for six chapters, whenever hearers took Jesus too literally, the text corrected them upward, sometimes by the narrator, sometimes by Jesus himself: the temple meant his body (2:21, the narrator's note), new birth meant birth of water and the Spirit (ch. 3), the living water was a spring welling up to eternal life (4:14), which John later identifies with the Spirit (7:39). The pattern has a signature, and your group knows it by heart because they have been tracking it. This is the one place the signature breaks. Faced with the literal reading, Jesus does not correct. He escalates: truly, truly, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you, and then the Greek verb itself coarsens, from *phagein*, to eat, to *trōgein* (6:54, 56, 57, 58), to chew, to eat with the accent on the physical act, a deliberately concrete verb (though not by itself decisive). He adds blood, the most offensive possible element to a Jewish ear, since Leviticus 17 forbade consuming blood on pain of being cut off, precisely because the life of the flesh is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), and that reason is the point: the prohibition guarded the truth that now makes the gift possible; his life, in his blood, given to be our life. And when many of his own disciples call it a hard saying and abandon him over it (6:66), the great doctrinal walkout of the Gospels, he does not run after them shouting that it was a metaphor. He turns to the Twelve and asks, will you also go away?

Prepare 6:63 with special care, because the steelman's strongest leg stands on it: it is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail. Notice what Jesus does not say: he does not say my flesh is of no avail, which would unsay 6:51 (my flesh, for the life of the world) and 6:55 (my flesh is food indeed) within the same hour. In John, the flesh, absolutely, names natural human capacity and perception without the Spirit: that which is born of the flesh is flesh (3:6); you judge according to the flesh (8:15). The sentence answers the how of Capernaum's question: not by carnal cannibalism, chewing a limb, but by the Spirit's power, sacramentally, really. That is not a retreat from realism; it is realism's mode. Many Fathers read it so. And the earliest of them is nearly an eyewitness: St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, writes on his way to martyrdom around the year 107 that the heretics abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ. By the first decade of the second century, while the Gospel of John was still fresh in the churches, a bishop on his way to the lions was staking martyrdom on the realist reading.

End with Peter, because your group will need him. He does not say, Lord, I understand. He says, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Faith seeking understanding, loyalty outrunning comprehension: that is where most believers actually live, and Jesus accepts it. And one dark seed in the

last verses: did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil? Judas enters the story here, at the Eucharistic discourse, of all places. Open the betrayal line on the board quietly and move on.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

- **Exodus 16.** The manna: bread from heaven, daily, for the murmuring wilderness generation. The typology the crowd itself cites (via Psalm 78:24), and the type Jesus claims to surpass: your fathers ate the manna, and they died.
- **2 Kings 4:42-44.** Elisha feeds a hundred with twenty barley loaves: they shall eat and have some left. Live discovery; the barley detail is John's breadcrumb.
- **Leviticus 17:10-14.** The blood prohibition and its reason: the life of the flesh is in the blood. Live discovery at the discourse's hardest edge.
- **Job 9:8 and Psalm 77:19.** God alone tramples the waves of the sea; His way through the sea, footprints unseen. Leader reads aloud at the sea crossing.
- **Exodus 12:8.** They shall eat the flesh. Leader knowledge ONLY, under the seal, until Session 13. The Passover lamb was not merely slain; it was eaten, and a Passover you did not eat was a Passover you did not keep.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Ignatius of Antioch (c. 35-107), bishop and martyr, Letter to the Smyrnaeans 7

Writing around the year 107, under guard, on the road to the lions of Rome, Ignatius identifies the heretics of his day by a single test: they abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins. Ignatius was bishop of Antioch, writing about the year 107; ancient tradition places him in the circle that had known the apostles. The realist reading of John 6 is not a medieval accretion; it is the church of the eyewitnesses' own children, staking martyrdom on it.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313-386), Doctor of the Church, Mystagogical Catecheses

Teaching the newly baptized in the very city of the upper room, Cyril instructs them not to judge the sacrament by taste: do not regard them as bare bread and wine, for by the Master's own declaration they are the Body and Blood of Christ. Though the senses suggest otherwise, he says, let faith make you firm; judge not by taste but be fully assured by faith. The fourth-century catechumen and the twenty-first-century communicant are given the same instruction, because the same declaration governs both.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Doctor of the Church, Adoro te devote

The Church's greatest mind wrote her humblest Eucharistic hymn. Sight, touch, and taste are all deceived in judging you, Aquinas sings to the hidden Christ, but hearing alone is safely believed: I believe whatever the Son of God has said; nothing is truer than this word of Truth. For Aquinas the entire act of Eucharistic faith rests where Peter rested at Capernaum: not on comprehension, and

not on the senses, but on the sheer reliability of the one speaking. Truth himself speaks truly, or there is nothing true.

Catechism Connection

- **CCC 1324.** The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life; all other sacraments and works of ministry are bound up with it and oriented toward it.
- **CCC 1336.** The first announcement of the Eucharist divided the disciples, just as the announcement of the Passion scandalized them: will you also go away? The Catechism itself reads John 6:66-67 as Eucharistic history repeating in every generation.
- **CCC 1374.** In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ is contained truly, really, and substantially.
- **CCC 1406.** The Catechism's own summary of this chapter: Jesus said, I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.
- **CCC 1385.** The examination before reception: let a man examine himself, and the requirement of the state of grace. For the Live It practice.

Thread Watch

THREAD WATCH

The seven signs tally. Two entries in one night: Sign 4, the feeding of the five thousand (the only miracle in all four Gospels), and Sign 5, the walking on the sea. Expect debate on whether the sea crossing counts as a sign; welcome it. The tally likely stands at five.

I AM. Two entries and a new species: egō eimi spoken on the water (6:20), the bare theophanic form, and I am the bread of life (6:35), the first predicate I AM. There will be more predicates; keep them all on one line and let the group watch the sentence I AM the ___ start to structure the Gospel.

Passover and the Lamb (sealed). The discourse is deliberately timestamped to Passover (6:4), the second of three. Bread, flesh, blood, sacrifice, at Passover. The guesses are compounding fast. Under no circumstances resolve; Session 13 pays everything at once.

Sign-faith versus real faith. The thread's richest night: the crowd eats the sign and misses it (6:26), demands another the day after eating one (6:30), and the chapter ends sorting everyone by what they do when the teaching gets hard.

The betrayal (NEW). One of you is a devil (6:70-71). Judas enters at the Eucharistic discourse. Open the line quietly; it converges with the Hour and the Lamb in Session 13.

Give us this bread always. Set 6:34 beside 4:15, give me this water. The Samaritan woman and the Galilean crowd make the same request in different words, at the same depth; watch what each does when the answer turns out to cost something.

Session Goals

1. Participants can name the two movements of the discourse, bread received by faith (6:26-50) and flesh given as food (6:51-58), and what changes at verse 51.

2. Participants discover that the misunderstanding pattern breaks here: Jesus answers the literal reading with escalation, the Amen amen oath, added blood, and the verb trōgein.
3. Participants hear the symbolic reading at absolute full strength, including 6:63, and weigh it against the text, the pattern, and Ignatius of Antioch.
4. Participants can explain from Leviticus 17:11 why drinking blood was maximally offensive and why that very reason is the point of the gift.
5. Participants stand in the walkout of 6:66, hear will you also go away as addressed to them, and take Peter's answer home.

Time Note (90 minutes)

Opening prayer and Win, 12 minutes; trim the Win tonight. Build, 60 minutes; this chapter has earned the extra five. Send, Live It This Week, and closing prayer, 18 minutes. If running long, the pre-chosen cuts are, in order: Build question 2 on the kingship (compress to two sentences of leader narration), the Elisha lookup in question 1 (narrate it instead of turning there), and the Dig Deeper on the manna's daily-ness. Do not cut, under any pressure: the verse 51 turn, the trōgein escalation, the Leviticus 17 discovery, the steelman chain, or the walkout and Peter's confession. If you must sacrifice polish anywhere else to protect those five, sacrifice it.

Part 2: Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Lord Jesus, bread of life, you fed five thousand on a hillside and then said something so hard that most of them left you. We are here tonight, which means we have not left yet. Give us honest minds for the hard saying, and when we run out of understanding, give us Peter's stubborn feet: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Amen.

Win (open the conversation)

1. Describe the single best meal of your life. What made it more than food?
2. Have you ever stayed loyal to a person or a commitment you did not fully understand at the time? What kept you there?

Transition: Tonight is the summit of the first half of our study. Keep your pencil on the tally board; nearly every thread we have planted is about to move.

Build (inductive discovery)

Have someone read John 6:1-15 aloud. Then ask:

Question 1 (live discovery). Collect John's deliberate details: what feast is near (v. 4), what kind of loaves (v. 9), what does Jesus do with them (v. 11, listen for the verb), and what happens to the leftovers (v. 12-13)? Then send the group to 2 Kings 4:42-44 and ask who once did something like this, at what scale.

ANSWER: share after the discussion

The Passover was at hand, and nothing in the story requires that note; John, many hear, is dating the theology as much as the geography, and your tally board should quietly log the word. Barley loaves: Elisha's miracle multiplied a hundredfold, twenty barley loaves for a hundred men with some left over becomes five loaves for five thousand with twelve baskets of fragments. The prophet's shadow, massively outgrown. The verb in verse 11 is *eucharistēsas*, having given thanks, the word the Church would take for her central act; and the gathered fragments are *klasmata*, the very term the earliest liturgies used for the Eucharistic fragments. Gather up the fragments, that nothing may be lost: John is writing with two hands, one telling a hillside story, one describing a liturgy his readers attended last Sunday.

Question 2. Read verses 14-15 again. The crowd concludes he is the prophet who is to come, and moves to make him king, by force. That sounds like success. Why does Jesus flee from it?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Because they are right about the title and wrong about the throne. A bread king, a wonder-working provider who fills stomachs on demand, is exactly the kingship this chapter will spend fifty verses dismantling. They want him for what he dispenses; he has come to give what he is. He withdraws alone to the mountain rather than accept coronation on their terms, and the refusal is a preview: this king will be lifted up, but not the way they mean.

Question 3. Read 6:16-21. Dark, wind, three or four miles out. What do the disciples see, and, listen to the Greek behind it is I, what exactly does Jesus say? Leader: read Job 9:8 and Psalm 77:19 aloud over the scene. What is John showing us?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

They see Jesus walking on the sea, and his word is *egō eimi*, I AM; do not be afraid. Job says God alone trampled the waves of the sea; the psalmist says God's way was through the sea, yet His footprints were unseen. Tonight footprints appear on the water, and the voice above them speaks the divine name-sentence. Log it: the I AM line takes its second entry, and this one is a theophany. Log Sign 5 as well, and let the group argue whether a private sign for twelve counts; the arguing is the point of the tally.

Question 4. Read 6:25-34. The crowd finds him and Jesus X-rays their motives in one sentence: you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. What is the difference between those two things? They then demand manna credentials, and end by pleading, Lord, give us this bread always. Where exactly have we heard that sentence shape before?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Seeing the sign means reading what the bread pointed to; eating your fill means stopping at the bread. It is the sharpest sentence yet on the sign-faith line: they consumed the miracle and missed its meaning, and by the next morning they are asking, what sign do you do?, to the man who fed five thousand of them yesterday. Spectacle-faith has the memory of a mayfly. And the plea, give us this bread always, is almost the well's request over again: give me this water, that I may not thirst (4:15). Two chapters, two thirsts, the same request in the same shape, and the same answer coming: what you are asking for is standing in front of you, and it will cost more than you think.

Question 5. Read 6:35-50. There it is: I am the bread of life. First, the form of the sentence: what new kind of I AM is this, for the board? Second, read verse 35 closely: in this stretch of the discourse, what do eating and drinking plainly mean? Be honest with the text. Third, verse 41: the Jews murmured, *gongyzō*. Whose sound is that?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

The first predicate I AM: not just the bare divine *egō eimi* but I AM the bread of life, a sentence with a claim on both ends. There will be more like it; the board gets a new species on the same line. Second, in verses 35 through 50, eating and drinking are transparently coming and believing: he who comes to me shall not hunger, he who believes in me shall never thirst. Say so plainly and grant it fully; the bread in this movement is Christ himself received by faith, and no Catholic loses an inch by admitting it, because faith is the door of every sacrament. Hold the movement distinction firmly; the honesty of everything that follows depends on it. Third, *gongyzō* is the wilderness word: the murmuring of the manna generation (Exodus 16), reprised on cue by their descendants, about bread, again. And Jesus' verdict on the first manna is a tombstone: your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. Whatever he is offering, it intends to outperform the type.

Question 6 (live discovery). Now read 6:51-58 slowly, and watch for the turn. What changes at verse 51, in tense and in substance? What question do the Jews dispute at verse 52? Then track Jesus'

response: does he soften, and what happens to the eating verb in verses 54 through 58? Finally, send the group to Leviticus 17:10-11: what did the Law say about consuming blood, what penalty, and, the crucial line, what reason does God give?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

At verse 51 the discourse changes gears audibly: the bread which I shall give, future tense, is my flesh, for the life of the world, the language of sacrifice, of a giving that costs the giver. The Jews take him literally, how can this man give us his flesh to eat, and instead of softening, Jesus swears: truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. And the verb changes: from *phagein*, the ordinary word for eat, John's text shifts to *trōgein*, a more concrete verb usually rendered chew or gnaw, four times in five verses (6:54, 56, 57, 58), exactly where the discourse turns hardest. The shift is striking, and it is not the direction a speaker moves when he is softening a figure of speech; it is not by itself decisive, but it is real. Then Leviticus: whoever eats blood shall be cut off, one of the Law's severest sanctions, being cut off, and the reason is the theology: for the life of the flesh is in the blood. To drink blood was to claim a creature's life; that is why it was forbidden, and that is why, the Church has heard, it can now be commanded. The prohibition stood guard for centuries over the truth that makes the gift possible: the life is in the blood, and he is offering us his. My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. The room should be feeling what Capernaum felt. Good. Now build the other side at full strength.

Steelman: A Hard Saying, The Case for the Symbolic Reading

BUILD THE STEELMAN FIRST: present this at full strength

This is the strongest steelman of our study, and parts of it are built from our own tally board, so give it everything. Leg one: the misunderstanding pattern. All study long we have watched hearers take Jesus too literally, the temple, the new birth, the water, and be wrong every time. The crowd at Capernaum takes his flesh literally; on our own pattern, the argument runs, they are the ones misreading, and Catholics have simply joined the crowd. Leg two: Jesus defined his own metaphor at 6:35: coming is the eating, believing is the drinking; the whole discourse is glossed as faith from the start. Leg three, the strongest: Jesus himself closes the discourse saying, it is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (6:63). There is the master key, the argument runs: the discourse was spiritual; a literal flesh-eating reading is precisely the fleshly thinking that avails nothing. Leg four: John, alone of the four evangelists, records no institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper; if chapter 6 were his Eucharistic doctrine, the omission is strange, and Capernaum had no chalice: no sacrament existed for his hearers to receive. Leg five: Jesus, a faithful son of the Law, would not command what Leviticus forbade. The conclusion: eat my flesh means believe in my sacrifice, vividly put, and nothing more. Let it stand. It is a serious case made by serious Christians, and the group should feel its weight before anyone answers it.

Question 7 (press from the text). Take the legs in order, and start with our own tally board, since leg one borrowed it. The misunderstanding pattern has a signature: when hearers go too literal, what always happens next, at the temple, with Nicodemus, at the well? Now look at Capernaum: when they take his flesh literally, what does Jesus do next, in verses 53 through 58? Then 6:63: what does the flesh

mean elsewhere in this Gospel (3:6, and later 8:15), and can Jesus mean my flesh avails nothing an hour after verse 51? Then the walkout at 6:66: what does Jesus not do as they leave? Finally: what did the generation that personally knew the apostles believe about this?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Leg one reverses on inspection, and the group's own board proves it. The pattern's signature is correction: too-literal hearers are again and again lifted upward, by the narrator (he spoke of the temple of his body), or by Jesus himself (unless one is born of water and the Spirit; the water I give will become a spring). Every time so far, for six chapters. Here, at the one place the stakes are highest, the signature breaks: faced with the literal reading, Jesus corrects nothing. He escalates, swears his double Amen, adds blood, and grinds the verb down to gnaw, four times. If Capernaum misunderstood, this is the only misunderstanding in the Gospel that Jesus answered by making it worse. Leg two: granted, and we granted it before the steelman was built; 6:35 governs the faith movement, verses 26 to 50. But the turn at verse 51 is in the text, future tense, sacrificial for, and a new vocabulary; faith and sacrament are not rivals, they are movements one and two of one discourse: faith is how you come, the flesh is what you are fed. Leg three: the flesh, absolutely, is Johannine for natural human capacity without the Spirit, that which is born of the flesh is flesh (3:6), you judge according to the flesh (8:15). Jesus cannot mean his own flesh avails nothing, or verse 51, my flesh, for the life of the world, and verse 55, my flesh is food indeed, died within the hour. Verse 63 answers Capernaum's how: not by carnal capacity, not by butchery, but by the Spirit, which is precisely the Catholic doctrine: real, and sacramental, not crass. Leg four: John writes last, for churches that had celebrated the Eucharist weekly for two generations; he supplements rather than repeats, gives the theology whose liturgy his readers lived, and leaves his fingerprints anyway: eucharistēsas, klasmata, and a Passover timestamp on the whole chapter. Leg five: Leviticus forbade blood because the life is in the blood, guarding the very truth that now makes the command intelligible: his life, in his blood, given as ours. And the walkout: many of his disciples drew back and no longer walked with him, the only doctrinal desertion in the four Gospels, and Jesus lets them go. Not one syllable of, wait, it was a figure of speech. He turns to the Twelve and raises the stakes instead: will you also go away? Not long after, St. Ignatius of Antioch, on the road to martyrdom around the year 107, defines heresy by this very test: they abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess that it is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ. The realist reading is not the crowd's error canonized; it is the reading the eyewitnesses' own children died for.

Question 8. Read 6:60-71. Sit in it. Many disciples, not enemies, disciples, call it a hard saying and leave. Jesus watches them go and asks the Twelve: will you also go away? Read Peter's answer aloud twice. What does Peter conspicuously not say, and why is what he does say enough? And do not miss verse 70: who else enters the story tonight?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Peter does not say, Lord, we understand. He says, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God. Loyalty outrunning comprehension: he has decided about the person, and so he stays through the teaching. That is where most real faith actually lives, and Jesus accepts it without complaint. The Catechism reads this very scene as the Eucharist's permanent history: the first announcement divided the disciples, and it divides them still (CCC 1336); every generation since Capernaum has had its verse

66, and every Mass quietly asks the Twelve's question again. And verse 70: did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil? Judas enters the Gospel here, of all places, at the Eucharistic discourse. Open the betrayal line on the board, write the reference, and say nothing more.

DIG DEEPER

Daily bread. If the group has energy: the manna of Exodus 16 could not be stockpiled; it bred worms overnight, and had to be gathered new every morning. The gift was designed to create daily dependence. When the Church prays give us this day our daily bread, and when she celebrates the Eucharist daily, she is living inside that design. The bread of life is not a pantry staple; it is a morning-by-morning relationship, which is exactly what the crowd, demanding a bread king with a full warehouse, did not want.

Synthesis question. You were on the hillside; you ate the loaves; you heard the discourse; you watched the crowd thin out. Honestly: what would you have done that day at Capernaum? And what, in fact, do you do this Sunday?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Do not rush past the discomfort; the two questions are one question wearing different clothes. Every Sunday the same Lord says the same thing over bread, this is my body, and the same three responses remain available: leave, stay confused but stay, or kneel. The Church calls the Eucharist the source and summit of the Christian life (CCC 1324) because everything this study has traced, the tent, the temple of his body, the wine at the wedding, the living water, the bread on the hillside, is aimed at the moment a communicant answers Capernaum's question with their body: Amen. If the room lands on Peter's sentence, to whom shall we go, the summit session has done its work.

Send

1. Do you take offense at this? (6:61). Everyone has a hard saying, the teaching they carry uncomfortably. What is yours, and what do you do with it: leave it, shelve it, or bring it to him?
2. Peter's faith was loyalty outrunning comprehension. Where in your life right now is God asking you to stay before you understand?

Live It This Week

- **Receive like it is true.** This Sunday, prepare on purpose: keep the Communion fast, arrive early enough to pray, and at the invitation to Communion make Aquinas's act of faith your own: I believe whatever the Son of God has said. Then walk to the altar as if John 6 were true, because it is.
- **Fifteen minutes with the answer.** Make one visit to the tabernacle or adoration this week, fifteen minutes, no agenda. Bring only Peter's sentence: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Say it once and stay.
- **Examine before you approach.** The Church asks us to examine ourselves before receiving (CCC 1385). Take ten honest minutes this week; if the examination turns up something serious, the same

Lord who feeds at one altar forgives in the confessional, and the second is the road back to the first.

Closing Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Lord Jesus, bread of life, flesh given for the life of the world, the crowd wanted a king who would fill their hands, and you offered them your hands instead. We do not fully understand; we are staying anyway. To whom else would we go? You have the words of eternal life. Feed us this Sunday with what you promised at Capernaum, and let us never receive you carelessly again. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

MEMORIZE THIS WEEK: John 6:68

Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (RSV2CE)

Part 3: Leader Reference Card

Every passage used or referenced in Session 7, in order of appearance. Flag these in your Bible before the session.

- **John 6:1-15**, opening reading, Passover at hand (v. 4), barley loaves, eucharistēsas, klasmata, the bread king refused
- **2 Kings 4:42-44**, live discovery, Elisha's barley loaves, they shall eat and have some left
- **John 6:16-21**, the sea crossing, egō eimi on the water
- **Job 9:8 and Psalm 77:19**, leader reads aloud, God alone tramples the waves, footprints unseen
- **John 6:25-34**, you ate your fill, the manna demand (Psalm 78:24 cited in text), give us this bread always
- **John 4:15**, cross-reference, give me this water; the parallel plea
- **Exodus 16**, leader background, the manna and the murmuring; gongyzō
- **John 6:35-50**, movement one, I am the bread of life, coming and believing, your fathers ate and died
- **John 6:51-58**, movement two, the turn, the dispute, the escalation, trōgein, food indeed and drink indeed
- **Leviticus 17:10-14**, live discovery, the blood prohibition and its reason, the life is in the blood
- **John 6:60-71**, the hard saying, verse 63, the walkout, Peter's confession, Judas planted
- **John 3:6 and 8:15**, press references, the flesh as natural capacity in Johannine usage
- **Exodus 12:8**, LEADER ONLY, under seal until Session 13: they shall eat the flesh
- **CCC 1324, 1336, 1374, 1385, 1406**, Catechism connections