

Take-Home 5: To Whom Shall We Go?

Keep your Take-Home 1 sheet safe, with your guess still folded inside. We will need it.

WHAT WE FOUND

In the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus finished the Bread of Life discourse, and when the crowd balked at “the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh,” He did not soften; He intensified: “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53). We traced the bread back to Exodus 16: a murmuring people, and a God who has always answered grumbling with bread from heaven. The manna was a rehearsal; the true Bread had come down.

Then the saddest verse: “After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him” (John 6:66), the only recorded desertion of disciples over a teaching in all the Gospels. He chased no one, softened nothing, and turned to the Twelve with the freest question love ever asked: “Will you also go away?” Peter’s answer is the treasure we carried out: he did not claim to understand the teaching; he claimed there was nowhere better to go: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Belief first, understanding following: faith that clings to the Person when the words are over our heads. The Church has been answering hard sayings with Peter’s sentence ever since.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

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St. Ignatius of Antioch | *Letter to the Smyrnaeans, 7 (c. 107 AD)*

Within living memory of the apostles, Ignatius warned against teachers who abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess it to be the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ. The hard saying was still dividing rooms seventy years on, and the apostolic churches stood with it.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine | *Tractates on John, Tractates 27 and 29*

The deserters demanded to understand before they would believe, and left; Peter believed in order that he might know, and stayed (Tractate 27, on John 6:69). Augustine distills the principle elsewhere in the same commentary: crede ut intelligas, believe that you may understand (Tractate 29). Only staying gets you inside the words.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Alexandria | *Commentary on John, Book 4*

The flesh of Christ is life-giving because it is the flesh of the Word who is Life; by it He plants His own life in us as fire spreads warmth into iron. The hearers' scandal came from imagining cannibalism rather than sacrament: they mistook the mode, not the reality.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

1. Once this week, bring your hardest saying into prayer and say Peter's sentence over it, word for word: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." Then five minutes of silence.
2. If you are Catholic and able, go to one Mass this week on purpose and listen to the words of institution as the answer to John 6. If you are still exploring, reread John 6:51-58 slowly and write down your honest questions; bring one back to the group.
3. Notice when you are tempted to walk away from something good because it got difficult, and ask whether the difficulty is a wall or a door.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68 (RSV2CE)

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read **John 13:1-17 and 13:36-38**. Watch what Jesus does with a towel, and what Peter says he will do with his life.

Catechism references from tonight: CCC 1336, 1374, 162.