

21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



THE GOSPEL. [John 6:60-69](#) (ANNE OSDECK)

This saying is hard; who can accept it?

Holy One of God,

you built up galaxies from nothing at all,
and wheat fields from barren earth.

You come to us too as the
grain of the land:
our bread
our life.

You
ask if
we could
ever leave you.

Well,

where would we go?
Others have no Spirit or life.

Please set our hearts on fire with your love!

Help us to always choose to love you
in every joy and every sorrow,
in all your hungry people,
in a crying earth,

always love,
always!

THE FIRST READING. Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b

Decide today whom you will serve.

Joshua
rallied the tribes.
“Choose today,” he said.
“What Lord will you
serve?”

O
God
of infinite
wisdom and power,
why do you let us choose?
Our decisions can wreak such havoc!

God says to us,

“I chose you.
When I created you.
I didn’t make you robots.
Now I want you to choose me.
Give me your love, freely poured out,
a deluge or morning dew.
Know I will love you
choosing.”

THE SECOND READING. Ephesians 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32

**This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ
and the church.**

Not the bride “in love” on her wedding day,
but the mother whose love
has been rankled by
storms;

has
struggled
in painful births;

has
learned compassion—
whose children teach her forgiveness.

In dimness she strives for light.
And shows radiance
with joy.

O Christ,
make us like her.
Nourish us and cherish us,

your
loving
Church.

REFLECTION: *(From St. Beuno's Outreach Team)*



‘You have the message of eternal life, and we believe!’

O God, who cause the minds of the faithful
to unite in a single purpose,
grant your people to love what you command
and to desire what you promise,

that, amid the uncertainties of this world,

our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found.

This Sunday, the readings invite us to consider honestly the depth of our love for the Lord. The same challenging questions once put to the Israelites by Joshua, and later to the disciples by Jesus, are being asked of us today.

The tribes of Israel are gathered at Shechem. They answer Joshua's challenge by declaring why they intend to serve the Lord. (First Reading)

The **Second Reading** is full of social codes and expectations that would have been well understood by those to whom they were addressed. In essence, these words are a discourse on the deep love that Christ has for the Church, a love so strong that it is compared to an intimate, loving relationship between husband and wife.

The full mystery of this love has been revealed over the last few Sundays, and again today, in the conclusion to Jesus's teaching on the Living Bread of Life (Gospel). For many of Jesus's followers, this proves too challenging. Turning to the Twelve, Jesus asks if they want to leave too. But Peter speaks for them all, and perhaps for the whole Christian community, in saying:

'Lord who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life.'

Once again we hear the invitation in the Psalm to 'Taste and see that the Lord is good'.

This week, we pray especially that our spiritual life may nourish us and all those around us, and that we may embody a loving commitment to follow the Lord at all times.

I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise always on my lips. *Responsorial Psalm*

‘Lord who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.’ Gospel.