

April 21, 2021

Reflection

John 6:35-40

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When Sister Joanne Witucki died several years ago, one of her former parishioners stated that “they learned more from her than they did from anyone else” in their life. We could say the same thing about Jesus. We have learned more from him about God’s heart and what it means to be in right relationship with God, one another and all of creation than from anyone else in our lives.

Today we hear three successive sayings of Jesus and what we learn is:

First, that Jesus is the bread of life. He is the One who alone can satisfy our deepest hungers and longings. He offers us the gift of his very self to be our nourishment and sustenance. Do we trust that God will use everything in our lives to fulfill our heart’s deepest desires?

Secondly, we learn that Jesus **will not reject** anyone *who comes* to him. To *come* means to move toward, accompany, be available, to be at one’s disposal, to align oneself with. It’s about relationship. Jesus doesn’t lay out a list of requirements for coming. We can come as we are and not fear we will be turned away because we haven’t measured up to our own list of internal requirements. Anyone, no matter what class, race, gender, sexual orientation, personal goodness or any other thing will cause Jesus to reject us. In fact, as he states elsewhere, he will give us rest from all the burdens we carry if we but come to him.

Finally, we learn that Jesus came not to do his own will but rather the will of his Father. And the Father God’s will is that Jesus should lose nothing of all that God has given him which is all of creation, but raise it up on the last day. All who believe in and come to Jesus will have eternal life. No one and nothing are left out.

Jesus went about helping people to see what they couldn’t see. That in God’s view, all are welcome and accepted fully. As Henri Nouwen reminds us, “Solidarity is the other side of intimacy. Those who have experienced God’s welcoming, unconditional love “come to the mysterious discovery that the intimacy of God’s house excludes no one and includes everyone.”

We need to let God’s way of seeing transform our hearts and minds so we can be God’s presence in our world: loving as God loves and loving what God loves ... nothing and no one left out from our love.