

17 April 2024 -- Wednesday of the 3rd week of Easter

[Acts 8:1-8; John 6:35-40](#)

Homily

In this brief section of the great discourse on the Bread of Life, Jesus affirms two things: The first is that He Himself is the bread of life, and that whoever comes to Him by faith -- whoever believes in Him -- will no longer hunger or thirst. Jesus satisfies all our hungers and thirsts, spiritual as well as physical.

The second is that he came from heaven to do his Father's will; and his Father's will is that he should not lose any of those He has given Him. Our faith in Him is a guarantee of resurrection on the last day and of eternal life.

The first reading shows us how God uses the trials of His Church to extend the preaching of the Gospel. The first preaching was obviously limited to Jerusalem. The Apostles had not yet understood the call to preach to all nations. After Stephen's death and the first persecution, all those who had received the Apostles' message scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Philip, one of the deacons appointed by the Apostles (to serve tables!) began to preach in a town in Samaria, and his words were accompanied by the same signs and wonders that accompanied Jesus' preaching. He cast out demons and healed the paralysed and lame.

As was the case for the early Church, haven't we often experienced, in our personal lives as well as in those of our communities, that moments of suffering are also moments of grace and growth, and that we learn more from suffering than from all our studies? Was it not through suffering that Christ learned obedience, that supreme form of love?

Finally, this brief text from the Acts of the Apostles introduces us once again to Saul of Tarsus, still a fierce persecutor of Christians in the name of the Law of Israel, who would soon become the person who would embody more than any other in his life the extension of the Church to the Nations.

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