

The Bread
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LCMS Northern Illinois District for CUC Lenten Devotions

As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take and eat it; this is my body." Matthew 26:26

It was when our children were young. "I'm hungee," the child said. I knew what the little one meant.

"Yes, you're our honey," I teased.

"No, I'm hungee." Yes, hungry!

What are you hungry for these days? What are you desiring? Have you hungered lately for what is wrong before our holy God and spiritually dangerous? Yes, we all have. We have selfishly desired revenge, gossip, power, lust, lazy leisure, self-security and much more. No excuses or blame needed, but confession and repentance are!

Jesus knew what those early disciples needed and what His people have needed through the ages. Himself! He knows best what you and I need right now! As He reclines with them at the Passover table, He takes the unleavened bread, and gives them the better meal. In this meal He is present in the bread... and the wine, "This is my body and this is my blood." As we partake we remember His past work of redemption and receive its blessings, celebrate His real presence in the meal now and as a "foretaste of the feast to come." Simple bread and wine become so much more with His Word spoken in the Sacramental Action.

I remember one of my seminary professors commenting on the bread in the Lord's Supper, that it "speaks to the harshness of life." It's followed by the "sweetness of the wine" which brings joy. Together, this Sacrament renews us and brings us life that is truly life and salvation that connects us to a glorious eternity.

The Lord still feeds us in the wilderness of life lest we become bitter and hunger for the wrong things. Jesus desires that you do not live death, but live life! Jesus says, "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35). And yes, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

What we need, the Lord generously gives! Himself, given and shed for you! It never stops with you but flows through you to a hungering world. How is the world in which you live noticing that you have tasted the Lord is good?