

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B

(Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18; Psalm 33(34):2-3, 16-23; Ephesians 5:25-32; John 6:60-69)

Theme: We Have Chosen to Stay and Serve

As it was for God's People in today's first reading, there will always come a time when we have to ask ourselves whether our faith is lip service or a service in truth and spirit. It could be a difficult, heart-breaking, or decisive moment of renewal and re-commitment.

However, it's crucial to remember that the nature of this moment should not overshadow the ongoing process of faith revitalization. As children of God, we are constantly seeking a greater purpose for serving the Lord, reaffirming our commitment to follow and serve the Lord and His people. This is not a one-time event, but a continuous journey of faith renewal.

Therefore, if we find ourselves dissatisfied with our current predicaments and longing to fill our emptiness and overcome our weaknesses, we must re-entrust ourselves to the Lord. The Psalmist reminds us that the Lord alone has the power to heal the broken-hearted and those whose spirits are crushed. This is a source of hope and encouragement for us all.

Having tasted God's rescue and liberating favours, Joshua and all the tribes of Israel reviewed and revitalized their covenant with the Lord in Shechem. In the face of other gods, they emphatically chose to serve the One, True, and Faithful God of Israel.

On the contrary, many disciples of our Lord Jesus in today's gospel ended their relationship with Him because not only did He say that He is the bread of life that must be eaten to have the fullness of life, but the Lord also declared that He is the bread of life come down from heaven to offer new life via the way of His cross and resurrection. They could not bear His teaching.

However, our Lord Jesus dropped the mic after reemphasizing His teaching and insisted that those with faith in Him would witness greater after His resurrection. Yes, the Lord's hard teaching shook His disciples and still shakes us, but the Twelve chose to stay with Him because, as Peter said, our Lord Jesus is the Holy One of God and has the message of eternal life.

As a community, we have made a collective decision to stay with the Lord. We are resolute in facing our reality checks in prayer and through the sacraments of reconciliation and Eucharist. Despite the challenges, we are united in upholding the teachings of Christ and the demands of commitment as disciples. This unity strengthens us in our faith, knowing that we are working with the Lord, the Master of our being, to whom we owe our life and happiness.