

Readings

Deut 8:2-3, 14b-16a

Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20

1 Cor 10:16-17

John 6:51-58

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One of Augustine's favorite images for human history and for each individual's life is that of a river rushing towards a distant, great falls. He writes:

As a torrent is formed from the rains and eventually breaks through its narrow banks and runs roaring down the slopes until it finally finishes its course, so it is with each of our lives. Indeed, the whole human race, gathered together from hidden sources, rushes through time until it dies, falling again into a hidden place. Thus, this passing state that we call our life roars and rushes away. (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 109:20)

We are rushing into our future towards the Falls and if we paid attention, we could hear the crashing of the falling waters even now. We are not especially happy about the prospect. We spend much of our energy trying to stay where we are...grasping at twigs to pull ourselves ashore into some quiet eddy where we can rest and "smell the flowers" and enjoy the view.

As we travel down the river we have constant hunger:

1. We hunger for life, we want to live forever and are afraid of the prospect of going over the great falls into the unknown world beyond.

2. We hunger for meaning, we want our lives, however short or long they may be, to *mean* something, to have some importance.

3. And most of all we hunger for love...we want someone, somewhere to care about us.

The feast of Corpus Christi goes far to help us fill these hungers. It is the feast celebrating the night that Christ gave Himself under the appearance of Bread and Wine to the world, with a

promise that he would be with all of us in the world till the end of time. Every time we celebrate Mass, everytime we take communion, we are reminded that we are not alone.

As we float down the river in the tiny boat that is our life, Jesus comes to us and gives us food to satisfy our hunger.

1. He tells us: if you eat this Eucharist with faith, you will live forever. For sure you will die, you will go over the great falls at the end of your life just as I did. But just as I did you will live beyond death and not alone but with me.

2. He tells us: your life does have meaning, it is important because it is important to me.

3. He tells us: you are and always will be loved. I became human so that I could share your life on this river. I gave you the Eucharist so that I could live in you for the rest of your life. I want to be with you. I love you.

Our lives spin on down the river. There will be some good times and some bad times. But at least, now, believing in the Eucharist and receiving the Eucharist, we don't seem to be as hungry as we were before.