**Homily** **for the 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time**

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        When you encounter a difficult decision, how do you make it? Today’s readings are talking about making decisions. Always, we are making a lot of decisions in our lives: little things or major life-changing decisions. Faith also calls us to a very important decision: to choose God or to walk away from God.

        In the first reading and in the Gospel, people face making a decision. Joshua chooses God, and the disciples chooses Jesus.

        Let’s pick up the story of Joshua. After Moses chose Joshua to succeed him, Joshua led the people as they marched into the promised land. Joshua, a great general, defeated enemies, led the people across the Jordan River, and invaded the land of Canaan.

        All the while, Joshua knew God guided and protected him and his people. God gave them a great victory. But now, battles done, enemies conquered, Joshua found it hard for the people to keep the faith to God. The people again fall into sin, and begin to bow down before the pagan gods.

        But, Joshua made decisions to keep his faith in God. He says, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord God, the God of Israel.” Joshua chooses the Lord God.

        In the Gospel reading, the disciples and Peter choose Christ. Note what’s happening. Jesus has just claimed to be the Bread of Life, that His flesh is real food and His blood real drink. In today’s Gospel of John, we have reached finally the great conclusion of the discussion about Jesus’ being the “Bread of Life.”

        The chapter six of John’s Gospel tells us all about the “Bread of life” and “Living Bread that came down from heaven.”

        At the beginning of this chapter, we heard the miracle of Jesus’ multiplying five loaves and two fish to feed the five thousands. Then, Jesus said, “I am the Bread of Life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

        And, following Sunday, Gospel continues to talk about spiritual hunger and eternal life. Then, Jesus said again, “I am the living Bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever,” while many Jews couldn’t understand and asked, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

        And, finally, this Sunday, in the Gospel, we have reached the conclusion of the discussion about the “Bread of Life.” It is taking about making a decision to take this “Bread of Life.”

        Faith is an entirely free gift of God which enables us to respond to God’s word with trust. Faith is the key to understanding and experiencing God at work in our daily personal lives. St. Augustine once said, “I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe.”

        But, the disciples couldn’t understand the mystery of salvation. They saw the great miracle which Jesus did for them, but they are still troubled to understand and believe. And, many followers turned away from Jesus, went back to their former ways of life, no longer followed Jesus.

        Then, Peter speaks for the Twelve Apostles. Peter says, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that You are the Holy One of God.” Peter’s profession of faith was based on the personal relationship with Jesus. That is the decision called for.

        There is an important decision: choose God or walk away from God. Joshua and Peter chose the Lord.

        Now, we come to our own decision. Will you choose Christ? Will you live like a Christian? Will you do what a Christian does? Each of us called to choose Christ, whatever our age or status in life.

        In the Gospel, Jesus asks His disciples, “What about you?” Jesus had called His disciples to come with Him. Their choice is to follow Jesus or not. Like Jesus asked the Twelve, He asks us, “What about you? Do you want to follow me or not?” The decision is up to us!

        When we choose Christ, our daily routine includes time for God and time for prayer. And, as Jesus came to serve, we are called to serve one another.

        Mother Teresa once said, “Spread love everywhere you go: first of all in your own house. Give love to your children, to your wife or husband, to a next-door neighbor. Let no one come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness; kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.”

        “Smile at each other, smile at your wife, smile at your husband, smile at your children, smile at each other, it doesn’t matter who it is, and that will help you to grow up in greater love for each other.”

        This week, let us reflect upon our commitment towards the Lord Jesus. Let us answer the question of Jesus asking us, “Do you also wish to go away?