

Second Friday of Easter ~ 4/20

"When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He withdrew again to the mountain by Himself." (John 6:15)

This line in John's gospel comes after Jesus has just fed thousands of people. He fed them with a couple of fish and a few loaves of bread. By anyone's standards that is an amazing accomplishment. We can certainly understand why the people might have wanted to make Him king. Here was someone who could make food out of nothing. With this man they wouldn't have to worry about where the next meal was coming from. Since food is basic to a person's existence it is not difficult to see why a hard-pressed people would want to make Jesus the ultimate provider and their leader.

Jesus resisted this type of kingship. This was not the reason that He came to this earth, but the people couldn't see beyond their bellies. They could not see that He had a different type of bread to offer, one that would be more fulfilling. With the crowds crushing in around Him, with their demands that He be for them what they wanted Him to be, He was not able to hear the voice of His Father. Perhaps some of these voices around Him were starting to make sense and He knew that He needed to go away, to become quiet in order to be clear about the will of the Father.

In the middle of our Easter experiences we too might need to step back and become clear again about exactly what we are celebrating; otherwise we might drift off in a direction that is not where Jesus intended Easter to take us.

Easter is about the beginning of new life, but it is not about the beginning of a soft life. It is not about having everything that we want here on earth but it is about having what we need to complete the earthly journey. Paradise is the place for total fulfillment, and while we walk on earth we will never completely experience the fullness of Easter.

Take some quiet time today in order to understand what Easter is all about and who the Risen Jesus wants to be for you. At the same time try to be clear about just what Jesus wants you to be. If images of servant or laborer filter into your consciousness you're probably on the right track. If, on the other hand, you find yourself dreaming of total satisfaction and the end of all worries then you may want to continue your prayer a while longer.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. What level of comfort do I expect the Risen Jesus to offer me?*
- 2. If I don't expect comfort what do I expect to receive from my Easter Lord?*

Prayer: Jesus, help me to follow Your example and to take the time to pray for guidance.

Let me not be lured from Your side by fame or power.