

## HOMILY 19<sup>TH</sup> SUN OT YRB 2018

We all have to eat to live, isn't that right? And here in Livonia, most of us have enough to eat, in fact most of us have more than we need and many choices in terms of what we eat. Sometimes we make good, healthy choices and sometime we make some not so healthy choices. One of the reasons we make unhealthy choices is that we have a junk food industry that is doing everything they can to sell their products. There was an article in the New York Times Magazine titled: "The Extraordinary Science of Addictive Junk Food." The junk food industry spends millions of dollars trying to develop products that have just the right amount of sugar, salt and fat that will provide a taste so pleasing to us that we will become addicted to it. And there is a whole psychology connected with it. For example, one of the products they talk about are Cheetos. They are light and fluffy and melt in your mouth, and this tricks your brain into thinking that they have no calories and you can eat a whole big bag of them. Well, we probably can eat a whole big bag, but all we need to do is read the label to find out that they are filled with empty calories. So, how do we get sucked in to this? The food is convenient, inexpensive and we just grab it quick because we are short on time. We eat it without thinking a lot about it, and then before we realize it, we are hooked.

In the Gospel reading today, Jesus tells us that he is the Bread of Life. We need Jesus to nourish our spiritual life the way we need food to nourish our physical bodies. This is again part of what happened after the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. At that miracle, Jesus gathered people together and he fed them and taught them. Jesus continues to do that every time we celebrate Mass. I want to suggest to you that every time you make a decision to attend Mass, you are making a really healthy choice for your spiritual life. Jesus is the Bread of Life and we need him to nourish our spiritual lives. Every time you come to Mass, Jesus is

present in 4 different ways. First of all, Jesus is present in the Eucharist. Every time we receive the Eucharist we receive the Body, Blood Soul and Divinity of Jesus. Jesus is also present in the priest, who acts in persona Christi, or in the person of Christ to bring about the miracle of the real presence. We also hear 4 readings from the Bible, the inspired work of God. Jesus is also present in the congregation, in each person that is gathered here.

I think we sometimes undervalue that presence. When I talk to people who have fallen away from the Church they frequently say that religious people are hypocrites. Well, it is true that none of us are perfect; we are all trying to live better lives. Actually, I would not want to be with a bunch of people that were perfect. How annoying would that be? That is why we are here, and in the process we can help and support one another. That is why we have coffee and donuts, spaghetti dinners, pizza nights to get help people support one another.

We have to make healthy spiritual choices. We have all kinds of industries that harm us spiritually. We have a pornography industry that is sexually abusing our young people and teaching us that people are objects to be used for our own selfish pleasure. We have reality TV that tells us that it is ok to humiliate people and call it entertainment. We have a billion dollar advertising industry that is trying to convince us we need things that we really do not even want. There are frequently much better things that we can do with the money. We have a growing number of people who have no external sense of what is right and wrong. What is right and wrong is whatever I think it is at the moment. We need an external measure to help us determine the difference between right and wrong that is provided by the Church. We have to be very conscious of the affect that these things have on our lives and make healthy choices. Choose Jesus. He is the healthy choice.