



Meditation for Wednesday in the Third Week of Easter

April 21, 2021

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. [John 6:35]

With these words, Jesus invites us to come to him with our hunger, our weariness, our longing. There are invitations in our lives that we expect, that we plan for and to which we respond with gratitude and joy. But there are other invitations that surprise us and make us feel either affirmed or humbled, awakening in us a mixture of hope and shame. Jesus' invitation does this, I think. Perhaps what we long for most deeply and resist most adamantly is the invitation to see ourselves as persons who are beloved unconditionally, imperfect as we may be. We tend to see our hunger as emptiness rather than openness, our weariness as weakness, and our longing as selfishness rather than the stirring of the Spirit. George Herbert's classic poem captures poignantly the first steps toward the acceptance of Christ's invitation.

Love (III) By George Herbert

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back
 Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
 If I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:
 Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,
 I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
 My dear, then I will serve.
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
 So I did sit and eat.