

So I love Chipotle Mexican Grill. And I'm actually pretty upset that there's not a chipotle nearby here in Exeter, but that I have to drive like 15-20 minutes across town back to Wyomissing or up to Temple. Not happy about this. So while Chipotle is awesome and it can bring temporary joy and earthly nourishment to my physical body, it can *never perfectly* or *deeply* nourish my soul or bring me the lasting and perfect happiness that I seek. Chipotle can never save me from my sins and from death and give me eternal life. In the context of today's Gospel, I would classify Chipotle as "the food that perishes" rather than the "food that endures for eternal life" and gives us perfect love and happiness.

Now you don't have to be Catholic or even religious to acknowledge this objective, universal reality about human beings: we as human beings have a mysterious, *innate*, and burning desire for *perfect* love and happiness that *lasts forever*. Anyone who claims that they don't seek perfect love and happiness that is everlasting, they're either lying to you or to themselves. I've never met a person who says, "I want to be happy on Monday, but unhappy on Tuesday" or "I just want to be loved for one day and not every day of my life." Nobody instinctively

thinks or acts like this. Rather, we as human creatures, naturally desire a *perfect and everlasting love and happiness that satisfies the deepest depths of our being*. For we were freely created *out of love, to be loved, and to love*—and so it is in authentic love that we are authentically happy. And perfect love brings perfect happiness.

Brothers and sisters, the reality is that nothing in this temporary, passing, fallen world can *perfectly* and *permanently* satisfy us or make us *perfectly* happy in any absolute manner. Sadly, many times we search for perfect love and happiness in all the wrong places like material possessions, money, power, social status, and sin. Certainly, there are goods in this life like food, friendship, marriage, and family that can bring us some authentic happiness to a degree, but it's never *absolutely perfect* and we're always wanting more, always seeking and yearning for a *perfect* love and happiness.

St. John Vianney famously said that man is “so great that nothing on earth can satisfy him. He can be satisfied only when he turns to God.” In today's First Reading and the Gospel, we hear of the peoples' hunger and their desire to be truly satisfied. We hear of their great

hunger for God. In today's Gospel from John, our Lord Jesus, the Son of the living God, powerfully exhorts us saying, "Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you...***I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.***"

Brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus Christ, truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist, ***is the perfect Love*** we naturally seek with every fiber of our being. Christ, Who is the Bread of Life, is the perfect Love Who can give us the perfect, lasting happiness that we are so hungry for. ***Only Christ*** as our crucified and risen Savior has loved us in such a way that frees us from our sins and saves us from the power of death. ***Only Christ*** can give us eternal life, which consists of perfect love and happiness forever in Heaven.

Indeed, the lesser goods in this temporary life like food, friendship, marriage, and family, which can bring us ***some happiness, participate*** in the Supreme Good—God, Who is infinite and perfect Goodness Itself and the Source of all finite goodness in the universe. Any authentic happiness we experience in this earthly life from a lesser good like

Chipotle, points to a much greater Good that can bring us even more happiness and satisfaction—a happiness that is perfect and lasting, a perfect happiness that only comes from perfect love. Brothers and sisters, *only God*, Who is Perfect Love, can give us the perfect happiness that we naturally seek. *Only God* can save us and satisfy us in the deepest depths of our being. The great British author, C.S. Lewis once famously said, “Human history is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.”

Brothers and sisters, if we’re not satisfied by God at all in this life, it’s not because God Himself is unsatisfying, but rather it’s because something is wrong in *our* life that’s not allowing God to satisfy us. If we’re not satisfied with God, then we’re either *doing* or *not doing* something that is actively preventing God from satisfying our restless hearts. Maybe we’re not praying as we should or if we’re praying, we’re not praying well, giving everything over to the Lord. Maybe we’re still holding on to certain sins, fears, doubts, and grudges that we can’t let go of. Maybe we’re just going through the motions and checking off all of the boxes. Maybe we’re not opening our hearts and minds to God in the

manner that we should. Maybe we're not yet giving ourselves *completely* to God.

We have to ask ourselves, "Can I honestly say that I've given my whole life over to Christ?" If the answer is no, then something in our life needs to change with the help of God's grace. If we're not satisfied with God for whatever reason, the blame for such dissatisfaction certainly *does not lie* with God, Who is Perfection and Goodness itself. We should *never* blame God for *our sinfulness* or lack of openness to Him in our minds and hearts.

The great Dominican Theologian Fr. Jean Corbon, OP eloquently wrote, "The most fruitful activity of the human person is to be able to receive God." One may say that as human creatures, we exist to receive God, Who is Truth, Goodness, Beauty, and Love itself in absolute Perfection. Ultimately, everything we need for our holiness, happiness, and salvation is found in God. As we prepare to receive God Himself in the Most Holy Eucharist, the Bread of Life, and the food that endures for eternal life, may we let go of whatever is preventing us from allowing God to truly satisfy us in the deepest depths of our being, for He is the

Perfect Love that ultimately brings the perfect happiness which we all naturally desire.