

Today's 1st reading and Gospel involve difficult situations in which people are confronted with a CHOICE. In the 1st Reading, will the Israelites serve the Lord, God as Joshua and his household will? And in the Gospel will the disciples continue to follow Jesus, even though they do not comprehend and have serious doubts about his teaching on the Eucharist? Some will; others won't.

There are many beliefs and teachings of our faith that we may experience in the words of the Gospel, as "hard". Some of these might be: that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist; that God is present in each person; that we are made in the image and likeness of God. Others might be: that God raised Jesus from the dead; that there is life beyond death; that God truly loves us, personally and individually. The list could go on.

Part of the challenge of adult and mature faith is remaining committed while enduring doubt, disagreement, and uncertainty. We may be filled with questions about many faith issues. These can oftentimes lead to a deepening of our relationship with the Divine as well as growth in our faith. Grappling with difficult mysteries is a sign that we are alive. We persevere and live with many unanswered questions. Ultimately, we trust. Why? Peter's response is as good as it gets: "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

God is with us. God loves us. And it is God who gave us the capacity to have the questions, doubts and uncertainties that are a part of our life.....a part of our faith.

THANK YOU for your faithfulness through the years. THANK YOU for living and practicing your faith in good times and in bad. THANK YOU for persevering amid joys and sorrows, gains and losses, uncertainty and doubts, questions and confusions. THANK YOU for the trust and courage you live amid the fears, worries and anxieties of life. THANK YOU for showing up when something inside of you tore at you to give up, to toss in the towel because so much simply seemed to make no sense. THANK YOU for choosing again and again and again to confirm your faith while experiencing set backs, confusion, and even times of hopelessness.

My sisters and brothers, this is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, through Christ our Lord. Amen!