18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Exodus 16:2-4,12-15

Psalm 78

Ephesians 4: 17, 20-24

John 6: 24-35

Last Sunday’s paper shocked me. The Buffalo Bills will no longer accept paper tickets to enter the stadium for a game – neither a cardboard ticket nor one printed off of a computer. The only way to get into the stadium is to have a picture on your smart phone. I have a smart phone that I keep in my car for emergencies. I think my phone is too stupid to go to the app store and download the app that will give me a picture I can show to the “ticket taker?” to go to a game.

It's a new world.

Then Monday I read that to fly on an airplane, I have to have what is called a “Real ID”. The paper said, “Real IDs are required for citizens flying in the United States under national security legislation passed by Congress in 2005.” Really, who knew?

It’s a new world.

To cross the Grand Island Bridges, there are two ways the state makes you pay for the privilege. One is to go across the bridge while a camera takes your picture and then sends you a bill. I went to Niagara Falls and obviously came back. A month later I get a bill for two dollars. Now I have to write a check for two dollars; put it in an envelope and put a stamp on it. Or I can spend twenty-five dollars for a transponder for my car that recognizes my car and deducts my bill from the twenty-five dollars I have in my kitty. No longer can I give a dollar to the person in the booth coming and going over the bridges.

It's a new world.

The same for our religion.

From our First Reading, we see that for us to believe in our God, we demanded meat and bread. That was the old world.

In our Gospel, to believe in Jesus, we demanded loaves of bread. That was the old world.

Jesus says with his coming, there is a new world. God makes a demand on us. We should be hungry not for quail or bread but for Jesus himself, plain and simple. Miracles are passé. This new world is a faith in Jesus himself – his words and life. This new world is to believe in Jesus as the Son of God and that through believing in him we may have a new life in his name. This faith is not a security blanket of calling ourselves Christian but a call to action to be Jesus. Rejoicing in the good. Rejecting the bad. Bringing Christ to others in our words and deeds. Living out our faith in and through him.

Share courage. Share compassion. Share joy. Share hope. Share love no matter what. This is our New World if we wish to live in it. Be Jesus through Christ our Lord. Amen.