What do you hunger for most in this life? I find it disconcerting that in our passage from the Book of Kings we have Elijah hungering for death. He prayed for death saying: ‘This is enough, O Lord! Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.’” Have you ever felt that way? Maybe at times this severe, or maybe not as severe, but we all experience challenging times at different points when we find ourselves collapsed on a desert floor. What I find remarkable is Elijah’s honesty with God in this moment. Elijah doesn’t mince words with God about how he feels. He tells God exactly where he’s at, even when he’s at one of the lowest times in his life. Even during the worst moment of his life, Elijah keeps his heart open to God and therefore keeps himself open to grace. And a very interesting thing happens. The passage says, “Elijah laid down on the ground. He fell asleep under the broom tree, and an angel touched him and ordered him to get up and eat. Elijah looked and there at his head was a hearth cake and a jug of water and strengthened by that food, he walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God.” Elijah was hungering for death. God responded by giving him food and told him to keep moving.

“The Jews murmured about Jesus because he said, ‘I am the bread that came down from heaven.’” This piece is fascinating because the only other place in the bible where we have the Jews murmuring in one voice is the passage from Exodus chapter 16. In Exodus 16, it says, “Here in the desert the whole Israelite community murmured against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, ‘Would that we had died at the Lord’s hand in the land of Egypt, as we sat by our fleshpots and ate our fill of bread! But you had to lead us into this desert to make us die of famine!’ Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I will rain down bread from heaven for you.’” This episode from Exodus sounds a lot like what was going on with Elijah in the book of Kings, doesn’t it? It also sounds a lot like what is happening in the Gospel of John chapter 6. Back to our question: what do you hunger for most in this life? Elijah’s answer was to die in the desert in despair. The Hebrews answer was they would rather die in slavery in Egypt. God freed them from slavery and all they wanted to do was to run back to Pharaoh. And this made me start wondering, when we ask ourselves the question any given day, “What do we hunger for most in life” how often do come up with really lousy answers? Jesus says, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.’"

What do you hunger for most in this life? Is it for food that perishes or for food that endures for eternal life? We all know that at times our answer to that question can be really lousy. We also know there are times and places in life when we can feel a lot like Elijah, collapsed in the desert in despair. God’s remedy for despair is food, food from heaven that is. By giving us His Body and Blood from the cross itself, think of that, Jesus commands us to not despair. The Bread of Life compels us to trust in Him always and to keep moving as members of His Body. We must keep moving. How do we begin? We begin by asking ourselves the question: what do I hunger for most? The correct answer is we hunger for Jesus, who remains the way, the truth and the life.