

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**

**August 22, 2021**

**Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Joshua 1-2a, 15-17, 18b † Ephesians 5:21-32 † John 6:60-69**



**Reflection by: Sister Eileen Ivory, OP**

As I began to read this Sunday's Gospel, I felt as if I'd been dropped into the middle of a conversation and wasn't quite sure what was being discussed. It was apparent that whatever was being referred to must have been very significant to warrant the response, "This saying is hard; who can accept it?"

So I picked up my Bible (actually used the Internet) and referred to the sentences that immediately preceded those in today's excerpt. The hard saying was spoken by Jesus himself, "...if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." These words to talk about Eucharist are still hard to hear today. We rely on faith to enable us to accept what we do not understand.

We live in exceptionally challenging times and the hard sayings seem to be multiplying. With each we are confronted by Jesus' question, "Do you also want to leave?"

Love one another	Do you also want to leave?	To whom shall we go?
Who is my brother/sister?	Do you also want to leave?	To whom shall we go?
Forgive 70 x7 times	Do you also want to leave?	To whom shall we go?
Love the stranger	Do you also want to leave?	To whom shall we go?

Hard sayings such as these push us to be our best selves. The times we live in require nothing less of us. Too hard? Do you want to leave? Look around. To whom shall we go???