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-- If you give a child a choice between a chocolate sundae and a salad, what do you think he will choose? That's a no brainer—unless he's the rare child who is allergic to chocolate. He'll take the junk food.

-- Trouble is...that doesn't last. Our body needs more nutritious things to function properly over the long haul. That's why good parents limit the sugar their children can eat and make them eat some nutritious foods.

-- Often, we can be like children when it comes to satisfying our desires. The Israelites grumbled in the desert because they were hungry. Never mind that they were free from slavery. The people searched for Jesus in order to have more to eat and to witness more miracles. Never mind they needed something more substantial.

-- Like children craving sugar, we often want quick fixes in life. We want our problems solved now. Advertisers know that, so they sell us products promising instant relief. They tell us we can have our cake and eat it too.

-- Even politicians promise the quick fix. You won't have to pay for what they promise—only the "other guy" will pay. Anyone who calls for real sacrifice from most citizens doesn't stand much of a chance of election.

-- Yet, deep down, we know that our deepest hungers are not satisfied by the "junk food" the world gives us. That's true about our physical, psychological and spiritual hungers alike.

-- Just as physical hunger is not satisfied in the long term by junk food, so our psychological needs can't be met through drugs, casual sex or power trips. And our spiritual needs aren't satisfied simply by the right music or a rousing sermon, as helpful as those can be at times.

-- St. Paul tells us that only a conversion of life will do the trick. We can't rely on the "junk food" solutions while throwing in a little prayer or Bible reading to soothe our consciences. We need to change our way of thinking, and then change our way of living.

-- Paul tells his people that they promised to do that when they were baptized. When they put on the white garment of Baptism, they left their old way of life to follow Christ unreservedly.

-- We did the same when we were baptized. Even if that took place when we were infants, we have renewed those promises, at least yearly at Easter if not more often.

-- But that conversion of life is a work in process. It's not a matter of doing it once and we are set forever. To sustain that continuing work, we need God's help, God's grace.

-- Jesus assures us that God's grace comes through believing in him, listening to his Word, and eating the bread of life. So we come here each week to do that, because conversion is a work that is never done in this life.

-- The singer/songwriter John Mayer wrote in one of his songs: *I'm in repair, I'm not together, but I'm getting there*. That can be our song as well. But we're only getting there with the help of God's grace.

-- So we come together once again to listen to God's word and to partake of his body and blood. We need that strength...that grace.

-- It may not work overnight. But it's not junk food. It's the real food that nourishes our souls for the long haul.