

## Homily by Fr. Paul Jones

Our Old Testament story is simple:

Elijah wanting just a little drink and a bit of bread.

Because of God, the jar never went empty, the jug never went dry.

Psalms-universalizes this to them:

The Lord who shall reign forever gives food to all the hungry, and promises to sustain everyone who is without.

Hebrews-different:

Ours is a Christ that enters the sanctuary in the heavens.

From there we eagerly await his manifestation.

Gospel-very different:

Here Jesus is admiring a poor widow who has just given to God the only two coins that she had.

I like to weave lectionary readings together, but what should I do with these? They suddenly came together in remembering a story I heard last week for the first time. About a little bread, a small drink, a priestly act up in the heavens, and someone who gave the only two things they had. Somehow, it fits.

This is how the story goes:

On a Sunday afternoon, July 20, 1969, about the time of day when Christ died Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. Buzz calmly radioed Mission Control: "This is Eagle, and as its pilot, I request a few moments of silence, inviting everyone who listening to contemplate the events of these last hours and give thanks."

During the silence that followed, he opened two small plastic bags. From one, he took a tiny, consecrated host. From the other, he poured wine into a chalice that his church gave him.

Then he read these words: "I am the vine and you are the branches; whosoever abides in me will bring forth much fruit."

Apollo 8 read from Genesis while orbiting the moon on Christmas. Therefore, Buzz planned from his citadel in the heavens to read that communion passage to the whole world. At the last minute, intimidated by the persistent protests of an atheist, NASA asked that his words be

silent-resulting in one of the best kept secrets of history,

Yet it did not matter, for there at a location well named the Sea of Tranquility, a quarter of a million miles from earth-as they prepared to make one giant step for humankind, the first meal ever eaten on the moon was the Eucharist of our Lord Jesus Christ-consecrating the whole cosmos as a Divine-human sacrament,.

This day, may our living and our dying be a testimony that this is so.

November 18, 2009