

FROM FATHER JOHN: *“Jesus said to them, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.’” (John 6:53 – 58)*



Yesterday, our parish celebrated First Holy Communion. It was a beautiful celebration of the sacred liturgy in which our children received the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the first time. I always find First Holy Communion to be a truly special day in the life of the Church. I am very fortunate that I get to see the looks on the children’s faces as they receive Holy Communion. Invariably, each child has a look of awe, wonder and joy on their face as they approach me to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their eyes get real big and their smiles grow wider as the presence of Christ enters into them in this very special way.

Every time we celebrate mass we share in the paschal feast of heaven. The Eucharist is our paramount means to holiness. It is foundational to the unity and communion of humankind in Christ Jesus. Jesus Christ’s words at the last supper as well as in the 6th chapter of John’s gospel are meant to be understood literally. They are not meant to be understood symbolically or figuratively. The Eucharist is not a mere symbol as many of our protestant brothers and sisters believe. The Church has always taken Jesus’ words concerning the Eucharist literally and this has been the solemn teaching of the Catholic Church from the moment of Christ’s ascension into heaven.

There are many presences of God in the world. But, the Eucharist is so unique that we simply call it the **Real Presence**. God desires to be with us so much that he gives us the Body and Blood of his only begotten Son. He gives us this intimate, loving and intense gift, the gift of him truly being present in our lives. What God has given us is his life; his very own life so that we can know him, love him, serve him and have life as he has life. This is the one great gift, the greatest gift we ever receive in life, and we receive it at Mass. Even though they may not have been able to express it in words, our children instinctively knew how great God's gift of the Eucharist is and were excited and grateful to receive this greatest of gifts.

St. Maximilian Kolbe wrote, "If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion." St. Theresa of Calcutta wrote, "'Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration.'" St. Francis of Assisi wrote, "What wonderful majesty! What stupendous condescension! O sublime humility! That the Lord of the whole universe, God and the Son of God, should humble Himself like this under the form of a little bread, for our salvation ...In this world I cannot see the Most High Son of God with my own eyes, except for His Most Holy Body and Blood."

I congratulate all our children who received First Holy Communion on Saturday and ask that you keep them in your prayers.

Austin Bene	Addison Figueroa	Elizabeth Pendergast
Maisie Beutel	Daxton Goslinowski	Samantha Pry
Nathan Blatner	Josie Hochstatter	Valerie Rosales
Lucas Boblie	Madden Kane	Maddox Schamberger
Tessa Brown	Callie Kern	Nora Schulte
Connor Carter	Kaden Knezetic	Ruby Schultz
Camren Clark	Noah Kostal	Nicole Shainberg
Garrett Clementi	Adeline Krumlinde	Andrew Szymanski
Keagan Clementi	Anthony Lara	Elise Teiber
Jacob D'Apice	Giovani Lara	Brooks Underhill
Payton Dillon	Abigail Long	Aaron Vargas
Lucille Falkner	Mara Morris	Bennett Walls

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.