

## Our First Communion is Not More important than Our Last

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ-June 18, 2017 – John 6:51-58

The Easter season is over. Most Catholic parishes have completed various celebrations of First Communion. We are well on our way to summer and now we are into the season of Ordinary Time in the Church. The celebration of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, gives pause for us to reflect on the fact that our First Communion is not more important than our last communion or any other Eucharistic celebration. They are all equal in the spiritual value and importance.

The fact that First Communion is one of the initiation sacraments along with baptism and confirmation is important in the fact that it is an initiation into more responsibility in the Mission of Christ. This happens over a lifetime. It's not a one-time Saturday or Sunday event that completes a check list. Rather, this is to be treated as a growing relationship with Christ that must happen over one's life. Baptism is a one-time sacramental celebration as is confirmation. Eucharist is something we are called to celebrate every week. We can celebrate Mass every day of the year (except on Good Friday) if we wish. Together, the three sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) are our official initiation into the Catholic Faith with Eucharist being the sustaining element of our Christian discipleship.

The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, often called the feast of Corpus Christi, celebrates one of the most fundamental teachings of our faith. This day stands as a celebration that Jesus, on the night before He died, gave us His Body and His Blood for all time. This sacrament not only provides us with His Real Presence but transforms us into the very thing we eat, His Body and Blood. Our transformation is not for our own benefit but for the benefit of the world. We are called to do something with this great gift of life. We are called to go out and change the world for the better. This transformation cannot be over and done. We are a work in progress.

One communion (our first, second or our five-thousandth) is not more important or more special than any other. Eucharist celebrated on the battlefield or in a desolate area of Africa is no less the fullness of the presence of Christ than the Mass celebrated here in our parish. What is important and what makes the difference is us and how we value this in our own life.

This week Jesus says: **"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."** So is this important to me? That is the question to ask. If I hope for eternal life then yes, this is important and I must do as Jesus commands. **"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."** This is for the Eucharist I first celebrated 56 years ago. This is true for the one I celebrated last week and hope to celebrate this coming week with all of you.

God Bless!

  
Sue Schettler, PLC