

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE – *Communion!*

'When Eucharist Becomes

5 / 6 June 2010

Dear Friends

This is a most special Feast ☐ the Body and Blood of Christ ☐ and a most special Sunday because, this weekend, our children receive First Communion and Confirmation. I have a confession to make: the title of this reflection, *When Eucharist Becomes Communion*, is not original! I borrowed it from an article in the magazine Intercom (June 2010).

Author Fr Kevin Doran reminds us that the experience our children have of 'first communion' is the experience of 'being touched by the mystery of relationship with Jesus'. Every Christian needs this food over and over again so that our relationship with Jesus can grow and mature and so that our relationship with other Christians can become stronger too. Isn't this what we strive for as a Parish Community, and as a Catholic School Community too? And let's not forget the Community of the Family ☐ the 'domestic church'!

The feasts of the Church leading up to today ☐ Easter, Pentecost and Trinity ☐ have highlighted the extraordinary relationship God has with us. In last Sunday's homily, I quoted one of the great preachers of our time, Fr Walter Burghardt SJ, speaking on Trinity Sunday 1992:

'Today ... is not God's feast; it is ours. Today, we celebrate God with us. However humbly you think of yourself, however much you may regret what you do not have, never forget the supreme gift that is yours, more precious and more lasting than diamonds. ... You are a living tabernacle; God is alive in you ☐ Father/Mother, God's unique Son, and their Holy Spirit.'

He went on to say that this God is alive in people like you and me and that this Spirit of God allows us to bring healing to one another not only in body but in spirit ☐ the kind of wholeness parents are so good at nurturing in their children.

For our children receiving the sacraments today, and for us too, this Feast of 'Corpus Christi' is 'our feast' too. Together we are the Body of Christ ☐ **'the Body of Christ at the table receiving the Body of Christ on the table'** (St Augustine). The Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation continue to form us and confirm us in our identity as Catholic Christians. St Augustine again:

'When you receive communion, you receive the mystery of your own communion in love. Being many, you are one body. Many grapes hang on the vine, but the juice of the grapes is mingled into

oneness. ... Therefore, be what you see and receive what you are.' (Sermon 272)

Fr Doran points out how the Eucharist draws us into communion with Christ and empowers us to make a difference when we are sent forth at the end of Mass:

Our Eucharist truly becomes communion when we go out from the Eucharist assembly to become builders of community, in which people experience themselves as loved and valued for what they are, rather than simply for what they have.

Eucharist transforms our families as receiving the bread and the cup remind us that we are to give our lives in the service of others. Eucharist becomes Communion in the nitty-gritty of everyday family life. For ourselves and our children, may the mystery of Christ in our lives become more so!

Fr Dave