

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE –
Word, Touch, Silence!

'Sacraments – Grace in

12 / 13 June 2010

Dear Friends

Last weekend was a most extraordinary weekend as our Parish experienced the Sacraments of Ordination, Confirmation and First Communion – some first-hand, some from afar – each linked closely to the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. There is a dimension of mystery about each sacrament, yet each touches us in a moment of personal need, each an occasion of grace, enriching our life, responding to our human needs – through word, touch, and through silence.

Tan's Ordination in Sydney was a very moving affair, with several parishioners present. The setting was impressive, the music full of joy, the prayers profound, but the actual moment of ordination was like no other – **the Ordination of a priest occurs in silence!** It is the moment when the Bishop lays his hands on the candidate's head in silence – one of the most moving moments you'll ever experience. [[Click here](#)] This moment continues as the other priests present lay their hands on the newly-ordained priest's head – again in silence!

Then on Sunday here in the Parish, sixteen children received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Brian Finnigan. The Bishop anointed each candidate on the forehead, making the Sign of the Cross with the Oil of Chrism and speaking the words, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit!" – **word and touch.** This sacramental journey began at Baptism where we were anointed with the same Sacred Chrism on the crown of the head, signed with the Cross, and we received the Holy Spirit – **word and touch!** Chrism is also the oil used at Ordination when the Bishop anoints the palms of the hands of the newly-ordained priest with the Sign of the Cross – **word and touch!**

All of this happened on the weekend when we celebrated the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ – the Eucharist, Summit and Source of Christian Life. Our children received Holy Communion for the first time, a profound gift from God – each welcomed into full participation at the Table of the Lord. Eucharist is the Sacrament of Jesus' 'real presence', the Sacrament that forms us and sends us forth into the world to be just that – the Body of Christ, Jesus' 'real presence' – in our families and homes, in our schools and workplaces, everywhere we go. Though we are not worthy, it is as if our God dismisses the fact and makes up for our shortcomings through his gifts. On our part, we need to respond to these gifts given. I share with you some wise insights from the late Archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin:

We are never worthy of this table, for it is God's grace and gift. Yet we do come forward. This is 'food for the journey' that we began at Baptism. We may eat of it when we are tired, when we are discouraged, even when we have failed. ... 'Worthy' none of us

ever is, but properly prepared each of us must be. Christ, present in the Eucharist and in us, calls us to be a holy communion, to grow in love and holiness for one another's sake. (1984 Pastoral Letter on the Liturgy)

Sacraments continually transform us. How will your life and mine be different today?

Fr Dave