

Third Sunday of Easter – First Holy Communion

May 4, 2014 - Cycle A

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Are you excited? Kids? Yeah, yeah, you don't sound too excited. Are you really excited? What are you excited for? Young boy responds, "I'm excited I am going to receive Jesus." I'm excited I am going to receive Jesus. Oh, if we could just get everybody to be as excited about that. Wouldn't that be something? If everybody would be really excited to receive Jesus. That would be like Heaven on earth, right? It would be heaven on earth, right? What a good priest you're going to be. It's going to be a great thing. Today, if all you kids ... can anybody tell me, first of all, you readers were phenomenal this morning, you did unbelievable. Clapping..... You made the Deacon look bad, just to let you know. Laughing..... Oh yeah..... So you did a phenomenal job today so hopefully that's a great sign of where we're going to go.

Now if anybody was paying any attention to the last line of the Gospel, that's the last thing that Deacon said, not "the Gospel of the Lord" either. The last line of the Gospel, does anybody remember? (Singing Do do do do.....) A boy responds, "He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread." He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. So you're going to be a priest, right? For sure? You already read phenomenal. Say, "Yes Father." (Boy responds, "Yes, Father.") Good Job! That will be the greatest thing. So yes, He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread so isn't that a phenomenal Gospel for us today when you receive the Eucharist?

Do you get what happens here? You know some people think it's okay just to have a good reading or just to have some good preaching but that's not enough is it? Because remember the Jewish people, they are walking along and they were complaining about what happened to Jesus and Jesus appears with them. Did they know it was Jesus? No, didn't they? And so what happens is, and He says, "What are you talking about?" And I love it, because He wasn't very gentle with them. He says, "You foolish people, you know how slow you are to believe." And then He says, "Did I not have to go through all this?" And He talks to them about the Scripture and then He breaks it for them. Do you know what we call that? It's called a Homily. It's called the Liturgy of the Word; it's the first part of the Mass.

But see that wasn't enough. What was the line? Did you get the line? I don't know if any of you got this, it says, they ask Jesus to do something with them because He was going to leave. But then they said -the boy responds, "Stay with us." What a guy! "Stay with us." You guys are getting A++++++ today. "Stay with us." And when they ask Jesus to stay with them, what does He do? He sits down, He takes the bread, He breaks it and He distributes it to them and then He separates. He is no longer there, He vanishes. Because what He's doing is He's saying Mass. The

first thing Jesus Christ did after the resurrection in Luke's Gospel was say Mass with these people. And the way Jesus stayed with them was in the Eucharist, what you will receive for the first time today. This is the way Jesus stays with you. Of course Jesus is with you everywhere, right? When you are at home in the middle of the night, is Jesus with you? When you wake up in the middle of the night, and you might be afraid, is Jesus with you? Of course. But Jesus comes and stays with us in this most unique way of the Eucharist, Holy Communion that you get to receive today for the first time.

So what I want to do is to think about three things you got to do now. You got to believe, you got to receive, and you got to live. Okay, what are those three words? You got to believe, you got to receive, and you got to live. Let's do it again. You got to believe, you got to receive and you got to live. First word is, first word is, you have got to believe, yes! You got to believe that what's going to happen today, see some people just go through the motions, oh yeah we get our First Communion, nah-na-nah, no, no, no. You got to believe with all your heart that the bread we are going to bring up here, just a regular piece of bread, right now just a piece of bread. But when I put my hands over it and we say the words that Jesus said at the Last Supper, what's going to happen to that bread? It turns into body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus. So that's what we got to believe. If we're wrong on that, we're worshipping a piece of bread, right? And that means everything is wrong in the Church. Because from the very beginning, we have believed that that becomes Almighty God. Right?

In fact, if you go to Acts, Chapter 2, Verse 42, it says, "They dedicated themselves to the teaching of Apostles, to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread until the prayers. That from the very beginning, Mass was so important to them, because they knew that was the way Jesus stays with us. So the first you and all of us are called to do is to believe it. That Jesus Christ is not a liar, is He? When He says "This is My Body," is that what Jesus means? Yes, but you got to believe Him when He says that. If not, if the bread does not become body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus, then Jesus is a liar. Because He said, "This is My Body." He said, "This is My Blood." And He says, "If you eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood," what's going to happen? "You will live forever!" So you got to believe that whatever happens, whenever you receive the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus, you get to live forever.

And so that takes us to the next word. So first you believe it, and then you got to receive it. Right? You got to receive Him. Let's say for instance, I don't know, but you decide to stop eating. What's going to happen if you decide to stop eating here? Sweetie Pie, let's say you just stop eating completely, what's going to happen? Girl responds, "You can die." You can die, is that God's fault? No, whose fault is it? It's your fault, why? Girl responds, "Because you chose not to." You chose not to eat. Now the same thing with Jesus. You know to receive the Eternal Life, you have to receive Him. He says, "He who eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, lives forever. So that means you got to receive Jesus now. For the rest of your life, how often? Girl responds, "Forever." Forever, but how often to make it practical? Every Sunday or Saturday night, right? So you receive Him and you eat Him so you can --- live forever.

Now again some people think that's no big deal. Oh, it's a big deal. Because if you stop eating, you stop living. If you stop receiving the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus, you stop living.

So it's so important, the first thing you got to do, you got to believe, then you got to receive, and then what's the last thing you got to do? Children respond, "Live." Live, that's the hard part, you know that? It's hard for me. That means that when you and I receive Jesus, then where is Jesus? Inside. So that means that no matter where I am, do you think that Jesus just stays with you for five minutes? Like when you receive communion today, you will go back in your seat and you will be, "Okay, Jesus, living inside of me now." What do you think? Some people think well He only stays inside of you for 20 minutes, right? Do you think that's real? No, of course not. St. Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ, so the life I live now is no longer mine, but Jesus lives inside of me."

So today, for the first time, your body will become a tabernacle of God. That means that we come in this church, we genuflect, in that tabernacle we believe is God. The tabernacle doesn't mean much. It's who is in that tabernacle and you see who's that, you know where the tabernacle is? Where's the tabernacle? In the center, right? What's in the tabernacle? Who's on the tabernacle first, do you know? Say the Blessed Mother. The Blessed Mother and the Angel, right? Do you know why the Blessed Mother and the Angel are on there? It's called the Annunciation. And what happens is when Mary said yes to God's will, what did Mary become? (Children respond, "A living tabernacle." A living tabernacle! Oh you guys are beyond.....oh the adults are going "I don't know" but you guys are--- "a living tabernacle," very good! You become a living tabernacle. And so you become the place where God dwells. That's why we always put Mary on most tabernacles, because she was the first one, where God chose to dwell inside of her. And you become just like the Blessed Mother today.

And then today after communion, what are we going to do special? Do you know? Child responds, "Pictures?" Pictures, yeah. Laughter..... We are going to have our May Crowning. And so we honor Our Lady because she teaches us how to be like Jesus. That when we let Jesus live inside of us, when we live that reality, we will become very holy. So what are the three things you got to remember from my homily today? You got to Children respond, "Believe, receive and live." What are those three things, you got to Believe, Receive and Live. You got it? You get it? You going to do it? We are going to be praying for you. May each of you know His love today and forever, Amen.