



Homily on First Holy Communion- 2015

Dear boys and girls,

I would like to congratulate you today because you look like princes and princesses in your shining, beautiful pants and shirts, dresses and crowns. You are happy and all smiles today and your parents, teachers and relatives are proud of you. They want to keep the sweet memory of this day by taking your pictures. They also want you to remember this day through out your life by giving you beautiful gifts like small bibles, beautiful rosaries, shining prayer books and other precious gifts. My question is why we all are happy today and why do we celebrate this day as the most important day of your life? You might have heard of Napoleon Bonaparte the French emperor who conquered most countries of Europe and wished to conquer the whole world. Somebody asked him a question. What is the most important day in your life. They expected answers like the day of his coronation as emperor, the day of his royal wedding, the day of his famous victories. But he said, "The most important and the most memorable day of my life is my First Communion Day." For each one of you this day should remain as the happiest and most memorable day of your life.

Why this is the happiest day of your life? It is because you are receiving the biggest celebrity, Jesus our God and Savior, as the guest of honor into your hearts and lives, for the first time, in Holy Communion. It means somebody very, very big is coming to stay with you, bless you, protect you and guide you. That is why we have all these celebrations. The next question is how does Jesus come to our hearts? Jesus comes to our hearts in the form of consecrated bread and wine. Do you see Jesus in the bread and wine? No. Can you taste Jesus or touch Jesus or smell Jesus in the Holy Eucharist we receive today? No. Then why do you believe that you are receiving Jesus in Holy Communion? It is because Jesus said that he would be there in the consecrated bread and wine. Nothing is impossible for God. So Jesus is really present in the consecrated host and wine. Ever since his resurrection on Easter Sunday Jesus has a glorified body. In Holy Communion we are receiving that glorified body of Jesus. That is why we cannot see or touch or taste Jesus' human body and blood when we receive Holy Communion.

The next question is why Jesus comes to us as bread and wine, as food and drink? You know the reason. We cannot live many days without eating or drinking. It means food is essential for the life of our bodies. In the same way spiritual food is essential for the

life of our souls. And the food for our souls is the body and blood of Jesus. That is why Jesus said that we would be spiritually dead if we don't eat his body and drink his blood. Hence you have to receive Jesus in the Holy Communion every time you participate in a Holy Mass and you have to receive Jesus after asking his pardon and forgiveness for your sins and with great reverence and respect.

A final question: What will you do after receiving Jesus in Holy Communion? First, you have to invite Jesus into your heart. Then you have to thank Jesus for coming to your heart. Then you have to tell him all your needs and the needs of your parents, relatives, teachers and friends. Finally you must remember that you are carrying Jesus to your homes and schools as Jesus' mother Mary carried Jesus to her cousin Elizabeth. It means that you have to behave well because you are carrying God Himself in your heart and soul. When you are alone tell Jesus living in your soul, about your parents, relatives, teachers, pastors, friends and their needs. Ask Jesus to make you a good boy or girl, an ideal student and a well behaving and obedient son or daughter.

I would like to thank every one who prepared these boys and girls to receive their first Holy Communion and remind the parents of these children that it is how you live and how you practice your faith in the family that is going to influence your children. Hence continue to train them in Christian faith and its practice, not by advice but by exemplary Christian lives. God bless you. (Fr. Tony)



Blessed Imelda, the Patron saint of First communicants:

Blessed Imelda Lambertini had a remarkable experience of this love. She lived in Bologna, Italy, in the 1300s. She wanted to be a nun from the time she was a little girl, and she joined that Dominican convent at the age of nine, to better prepare herself for the day when she would take the habit. Her greatest desire was to receive Holy Communion, but in those days you had to be at least twelve-years- old to do so. Imelda begged for an exception to the rule, but the chaplain refused. She kept praying for special permission. Her prayers were miraculously answered on the Feast of the Ascension in 1333. After Mass, she stayed in her place in the chapel, where one of the nuns was putting away the sacred vessels. Suddenly, the nun heard a noise and turned towards Imelda. Hovering in mid air in front of Imelda as she knelt in prayer was a sacred host, the Blessed Eucharist, shining with