

Stand Up And Be Counted



I have mentioned the Eucharist in my recent Reflections because it is one of the most important parts of my life. So, I'm going to take this opportunity to pitch the ministry to you. The next Eucharistic Ministry formation will be held on Wednesday May 30 from 6:30 – 9:00 pm in the Church's Social Room. I have flyers for those interested in attending.

According to *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, the Eucharist is the “source and summit of Christian life.” It is one of *THE* defining principles of what it means to be Catholic. And, in my own personal view, it is one of God's greatest gifts to the universe. However the Pew Research Center's *Forum On Religion & Public Life* reported some statistics that we practical Catholics may find disturbing:

Just a few ticks over half of the Catholics polled are aware that the Church teaches Transubstantiation – that the bread and wine are Christ's body and blood.

And more than four-in-ten Catholics say that the bread and wine used for Communion are just symbols of the body and blood of Jesus.

Can you remember your First Holy Communion? I do, and May 15 is still one of the most important days on my calendar. (I didn't mention the year, because most of the men in this room had not even been thought of yet.) The least memorable part of that day was the Host lodging in the roof of my mouth. It was very uncomfortable. My mouth was dry, and my tongue couldn't budge it. It was sinful to touch a Host, and to bite it would have been even worse. It seemed like an age before I

had enough saliva to soften it so I could recite the prayers that Sister Mary had drilled into me.

So, why is the Eucharist so special? In the Eucharistic Liturgy and our prayers before the Blessed Sacrament, we experience Christ's presence in personal and profound ways. As Pope Benedict pointed out in his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, "A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented."

As such, the Eucharist ...

... calls us into action, allowing us to live out our Christian vocation and become role models for our community.

... challenges and prepares us for our mission to transform the world, beginning with our roles as the spiritual leaders of our families.

To bring this closer to home, I offer these opportunities for each of you to stand up and be counted as a role model.

Stand next to your wives when you receive Holy Communion at Mass. As a Eucharistic Minister, I am impressed whenever I see couples approach the Eucharist as one.

Become Eucharistic Ministers. When you and your wives stand next to each other as Ministers, you will imprint upon your children an indelible image of a Catholic couple. What better model for your sons and daughters to follow when they discern their own spouses.

Our Parish celebrates its First Holy Communion Masses this coming weekend. In closing, brothers, I'd like to ask a rhetorical question for your own personal reflections? Which is the more important? Your First Holy Communion or the one you received last?

Can I get an Amen?