

Nothing is lost in this change and some things are gained. In my experience some really liked having First Communion at the Saturday evening Mass so that relatives from out of town could join the celebration and still return home on Sunday morning. Others chose the first Mass on Sunday morning and then went out for brunch. Some wanted to be with extended family or special classmates and signed up for the same Mass. It all worked out very well.

I do hope you will give this change a fair chance. I'm confident that in a few years people will be saying, —We always did it that way.¶ In the end, it really does make sense.

Blessings,

Fr. Ken Knippel
Pastor

MOST HOLY TRINITY
2 MAY 30, 2010

PASTOR'S CORNER - FIRST COMMUNION CHANGE

A few weeks ago I promised you more information about the change in the way we will celebrate First Communion in 2011. My P.S. announcement of it stirred up quite a controversy. Much of it subsided after further explanation was given to the parents. Here is the letter I sent to all first grade parents a week ago. I know change is difficult because of fear of loss. I hope this letter will reassure everyone that nothing will be lost and much will be gained by this change.

May, 2010

Dear Parents,

Recently our parish celebrated First Communion and the word coming from our second grade parents and families is that it was most beautifully celebrated. That comes after a few changes that Dawn Van Dorf and I initiated in the two years we have been working together. It is our consistent goal to make the reception of the Eucharist for the first time a very significant event for all involved.

It is with that continued goal in mind that we have been discussing having First Communion within the context of the Sunday assembly (which includes Saturday evening Mass) and after obtaining the approval of the Prayer and Worship Committee, have decided to begin in May of 2011. Sunday is the Lord's Day, and that itself is significant in our decision. The first reception of the Eucharist is also the second step in the Catholic initiation process, and so it is fitting that it be celebrated with members of the larger community to which the family and the child belong. It is also good to have the parish community not only witness this great event each year and be inspired by it, but also to provide support through their own participation. Many people no longer have family members of First Communion age and so never get a chance to be a part of the event. Now they will. Moving it to Sundays will also eliminate the need for finding willing liturgical ministers for two additional Masses that weekend and will also free the church for a possible funeral or wedding on that Saturday.

The actual event will not differ from what we've done over the past two years. Families will be asked to choose which of the five weekend Masses they would like to attend. A pew will be reserved for the family and the communicant. Guests and relatives will be most welcome to attend. The children will process in before Mass begins. They may or may not come forward for the homily depending on the homilist and the message, but will come to the font to renew their baptismal promises. They will bring forward the bread and wine as a group and come forward to the top step of the sanctuary to receive the consecrated bread from the priest and the consecrated wine from a lay minister. I have been celebrating First Communion this way for over 15 years, and this is also the way it is done at many parishes. I have found the response of all to be most positive.