

We would like to especially welcome our visitors today

Grandparents, aunts and uncles

Other family and friends who have come here for a very special day

To celebrate with our second graders

As they receive Jesus Christ in 1st Holy Communion

I would bet many of them remember their own 1st Communion

And they know this is a big deal

As it was for them

When many of their own grandparents would have been there

This is a special time in your lives

You have been learning a lot about Jesus

Who he is and his miracles

What he did for us

What Holy Communion is

And you will continue learning more about him still

But today you begin not to just know about him

You begin to know him in a special way

And he will come to know you better as well

Receiving him in communion

His body and blood

His soul and divinity

We begin, little by little, to become his disciples

His hands and feet

His voice to the world

In a real way, we become him

To begin to realize this should fill us with a sense of awe

Like the disciples in our 1st reading

They devoted themselves

to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life,

to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone,

Like Thomas in our Gospel

When he reached into Jesus' side

Into the wounds on his hands

My Lord and my God

This sense of awe is something I think we have lost

We seem to take for granted the Eucharist

The fact that God became man

That he chose to become one of us

To walk in our shoes

To experience our limitations

To experience human emotions and feelings

He even chose to die for us

And why?

So we could live with him for eternity

This should fill us with a sense of awe

A sense that we are unworthy

Because, in fact, that is the case

To experience this love

A love that created us

A love that has placed us here on this earth

A love that has offered his life for us

A love that chooses to remain with us in the Eucharist

A love that offer forgiveness in the sacrament of penance

A love that continues to call us

Continues to invite us into his life

Beginning in this world

So we can enter into it fullness in the next

This is the love God has for each of His children

A love that goes beyond even His love for his angels

In fact, they are probably a bit jealous of you today

God did not become an angel

Jesus became human

The angels don't have a special day like this

A day when they become a tabernacle for Jesus

You know what a tabernacle is, right?

It is a special vessel that holds Jesus

Most of them are Gold or silver, and very beautiful

Today you become a tabernacle, when you receive Jesus

You will carry him around in your hearts and souls

And when God looks down and sees all these tabernacles

Which ones do you think he loves more?

The gold and silver ones we make

Or the ones He made

His sons and daughters made in His own image and likeness

There's really no comparison

For one, you are created by God

And another thing, when you come to receive Jesus

You can talk to him

You can say

'Jesus, I love you'

'Jesus, I trust in you'

'Jesus I believe in you'

And after, back in your pews, you can say

'Jesus, stay with me awhile'

'Thank you Jesus, for all the blessings in my life'

Gold and silver tabernacles cannot say these things

And Jesus will never leave you

He is your friend

He wants to come to you

He wants you to come to him

Does this fill you with awe?

That Jesus loves you so much he died for you

That he chose something so humble and ordinary as bread and wine

To become his body and blood

So he could be with us

And we could be with him as we walk through this life

But there are times in life we get confused

We want to follow our own course

Our concerns

And we forget his

Perhaps we even stop coming to church,

Yet he waits, calling to us in the silence

He is there.

He gave us the Sacrament of confession to heal our relationship

And he gave us the Eucharist to strengthen it.

He will not leave us.

When we receive him, we begin to know him in a new way

To have a relationship with him

And you will grow in this relationship every day of your life

How do we grow in this relationship?

By following him

Coming the Mass every Sunday

Keeping holy the Sabbath

This is not about filling a requirement

It is about a response in love

To the greatest love ever lived

Today, you become special tabernacles of Jesus

And by doing this you are examples for us adults

Because we are called to have a child-like faith

Trusting, grateful, loving

Not a childish faith that is selfish and self-seeking

We need your examples

So we can remember that we too are little tabernacles

We too have a friend who will never abandon us

And we can truly know Jesus

And be with him always

(Blessed Dorothy Day)