

Today is one of the most beautiful days in the Church.

Corpus Christi.

The Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

And today our children come forward for First Holy Communion.

A day families remember for the rest of their lives.

The clothes.

The joy.

The photographs.

The celebration.

But today the Church asks us to look deeper than all of that.

Because the centre of today is not us.

The centre is Jesus Christ.

And that is massively important.

Because sometimes people can speak about First Communion as though the important thing is that the child has reached a milestone.

Almost like graduation.

But the Church says something far greater is happening.

Today these children receive Jesus Christ Himself for the first time.

Not a symbol.

Not merely a reminder.

Him. Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

The living God enters the human soul.

There is nothing greater that can happen to a person on earth.

In the Gospel today Jesus speaks with extraordinary force.

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven.”

And then He says something even more shocking:

“My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.”

Many people left Jesus because of these words.

If He had meant only a symbol, this was the moment to explain Himself.

But He does not soften His words.

Because He means exactly what He says.

At every Mass, bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The same Jesus born of Mary.

The same Jesus crucified on Calvary.

The same Jesus risen from the dead.

And that means Holy Communion is not something ordinary.

We are not simply receiving bread.

We are receiving heaven's greatest gift.

God gives Himself to us completely.

Think about that.

The Creator of the universe desires to enter the soul of a child.

And perhaps that is why today's first reading matters so much.

Moses reminds Israel how God fed His people in the desert with manna from heaven.

Bread they could never have imagined. But even the manna was only preparation.

Because God was preparing His people for the true Bread from Heaven:
Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

The manna sustained earthly life for a time.

The Eucharist nourishes the soul for eternal life.

And St Paul says today:

“The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?”

Notice that word: participation.

Holy Communion unites us to Christ.

We do not merely think about Jesus from a distance.

We receive Him.

And if we receive Him with faith,
He changes us slowly from within.

The saints became saints because they stayed close to the Eucharist.

And children,
today especially I want to say this to you:

Never forget who you receive today.

You are receiving Jesus.

Speak to Him.
Love Him.
Stay close to Him.

One Holy Communion received with love is worth more than all the treasures in the world.

And parents and grandparents,
today is not the finish line.

It is the beginning.

The greatest gift you can give these children is not a party,
not money,
not presents.

It is helping them remain close to Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Bring them to Mass.
Teach them to pray.
Bring them to Confession.
Show them by your own example that the Eucharist matters.

Because children learn what is important by watching the adults around them.

And perhaps today all of us should ask ourselves honestly:

Do I truly believe what I receive at Mass?

Because if this really is Jesus Christ, then nothing here is ordinary.

The Mass is not a performance.

The church is not just a meeting place.

Holy Communion is not a routine.

This is Calvary made present.

This is heaven touching earth.

This is God feeding His people with divine life.

And that is why the Church treats the Eucharist with such reverence.

Why we genuflect.

Why we kneel.

Why we keep silence.

Why the tabernacle matters.

Because Jesus Christ is here.

Today these children receive a gift greater than they yet fully understand.

And honestly, the rest of us are still learning how great that gift is too.

Because the Eucharist is the heart of the Church.

Without the Eucharist, the Church dies.

Without the Eucharist, the soul grows weak.

But where the Eucharist is loved, saints arise.

So today let us pray for these children.

That this First Holy Communion will be the beginning of a lifetime of friendship with Jesus Christ.

And let us pray for ourselves too:

That we may never become casual about the greatest gift God has given to His Church: His own Body and Blood, given for the life of the world.