

Dear Sacred Heart Parishioners,

For many years, each Spring (pre-Covid, of course), I have had the privilege of giving a tour of our beautiful Church to the children who would soon be celebrating their First Holy Communion. We talk about the religious statues and the Stations of the Cross, gather around the Baptismal Font where many of them were brought as babies and around the Altar where I show them the view I have of the congregation each Sunday. I share with them how wonderful it is to see the families of our parish gathered together for Holy Mass and, in time, I get to know where each family usually sits when they come to Church. I also take them into the Sacristy and show them the vestments and the vessels .the altar wine and the plastic bags filled with different sizes of unconsecrated hosts. But it is when I lead them into the Eucharistic Chapel and I explain to them the meaning of the Sanctuary Candle and the image on the golden Tabernacle of the mother pelican and her young, that I notice a difference in their demeanor. At last, I open up the Tabernacle and bring out a Ciborium and, lifting up the lid, show them Holy Communion, the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ, the Lord Jesus, and I notice a profound spirit of awe appear in their eyes, on their faces, in the way they are moved to stand up straight, instantly fold their hands and reverently gasp. “This”, I tell them, “is Who you will be receiving on your First Communion Day and for the rest of your lives.”

“In supremae nocte coenae, Recumbens cum fratribus,  
Observata lege plene, Cibis in legalibus,  
Cibum turbae duodenae, Sedat suis manibus.”

“On the night of that last supper, seated with His chosen band,  
He, the Paschal victim eating, First fulfills the Law’s command;  
Then, as food, to the disciples Gives Himself with His own hand,”

Thank you, children, for your faith, your trust, and your love that leads me to the meaning and the mystery of the Eucharist again and again.

*Father John*