

## HELPFUL DOs & DON'Ts

### RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.

- Be attentive to the moment of receiving Holy Communion and pray the action. Try not to let it simply become a habit – albeit a good habit.
- Speak out the *Amen* consciously and clearly and teach your children or grandchildren to do the same. Amen means '*so be it*' and it is your assent to receiving this spiritual gift.
- Children who have not yet made their First Communion can receive a blessing or the sign of the cross. Tell them to cross their arms across their chests to indicate that they would like to receive a blessing and to say *Amen*.
- When you return to your pew make a conscious effort to spend some time in quiet prayer either kneeling or seated and teach your children or grandchildren to do the same. We need to savour what we have received in inner silence.
- Communion time is not a break in the Liturgy and certainly not a time to start chatting or leaving. It is a time for quiet reverence and inner silence.

# Praying the Mass

## 4. BECOME WHAT YOU RECEIVE

14<sup>th</sup> August

*Welcoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Roman Missal*

## BECOME WHAT YOU RECEIVE

Going to Holy Communion is a twofold action. It involves receiving and becoming. St. Augustine often instructed his congregations,

**“Receive the Body of Christ  
and become what you receive”.**

In receiving Holy Communion we ponder on the depth of Christ’s love for us. In becoming the Body of Christ we respond to that immense love.

So much of modern society defines us by what we do or by what we have. What do you do for a living? What is your income? What kind of car do you drive? Communion defines us by ‘who we are becoming’ – the kind of person we are becoming. Receiving Holy Communion should lead us to ask of ourselves – what kind of person am I becoming?

St. Paul, in his famous passage on love in his first letter to the people of Corinth in Greece, describes for us the kind of person we should strive to be. As you read his words replace the word ‘love’ with the word ‘Jesus’,

*Love is always patience and kind;*

*Love is never jealous;*

*Love is never boastful or conceited;*

*Love is never rude or selfish;*

*Love does not take offence and is not resentful.*

*Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth;*

*Love is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever ends.*

*(1 Cor. 13: 4-7)*

Imagine meeting such a person as Jesus. Imagine becoming such a person! Read it again and replace Jesus’ name with your own name!

Don’t be discouraged. Many of us may not reach such heights of personal growth, self-control and inner integrity but isn’t it worth striving for? Maybe that is why St. Paul begins this section of his letter, “*Be ambitious for the higher gifts*”. Wanting to become such a person is the first step and even if we can live only moments of such love in our lives then all the effort would not be in vain.

However, remember even such moments of love are not something we can achieve by our own will. It requires the ‘indwelling of the Holy Spirit’ in our heart and soul. The ‘becoming’ always returns to the ‘receiving’ – receiving His Body; receiving His Love in Holy Communion enables us to live such love.

So the next time you put out your hand or your tongue to receive Holy Communion, know what you are asking for and know what you are receiving.

- Take your time as you walk, with the rest of the congregation, to the Altar in procession.
- Prepare yourself spiritually before you come before the priest or the extra-ordinary minister of Holy Communion.
- Receive the Eucharist with great reverence and devotion.