

APRIL FAITH HABIT

RECEIVE THE HOLY EUCHARIST FOR STRENGTH AND NOURISHMENT

Time flies. I believe it, as we are looking at our last faith habit for 2012-2013. We started back in October to use seven faith habits to help us grow as Catholics in this Year of Faith as proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI.

Here is a summary of where we have been in our journey with the faith habits: Offer a Prayer at Mealtimes (October), Call Upon the Saints (November), Reach Out to help a Neighbor (December), Give Thanks to God Each Night (January), Savor a few minutes of Silence (February) and Ask for God's blessing each morning (March).

We used a little magnet to illustrate the seven faith habits and I hope you received one and keep it in a place where you can see it. I hope one of these Catholic faith habits help you long term because all these habits are for our life time.

There is no greater habit for a life time that ties all the other six habits together than the seventh habit; **Receive the Holy Eucharist for Strength and Nourishment.**

It is this habit we especially point to the weekend as we attend Mass on Saturday or Sunday at our local parish. The Bible points to at least four moments to remind us how important Sunday is for us. First, in the story of creation the Lord creates the world in six days and rested on the seventh day. Why? Was the Lord tired? No, "so God blessed the seventh day and made it holy." (Genesis 2:3) Sunday is to be a holy day. Second, in the Ten Commandments the Lord gave Moses (and us) a guide for our life and the third commandment is "keep holy the Sabbath day," (Exodus 20:8), which for us is celebrated over the weekend with Mass and our life style on the weekend. Sunday is a holy day.

Third, the Lord pointed his life towards our weekend celebration of Mass by celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles and looking the apostles in the eye and saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; **do this** in memory of

me.” (Luke 22:19) Fourth, the Lord rose from the dead on Sunday (Easter) and so the Mass points to that day that changed the world. Sunday is a holy day.

So when we receive the Eucharist during a weekday Mass or a weekend Mass we continue to proclaim the story of salvation that started to be proclaimed in the Book of Genesis and now is proclaimed today. Our lives are to be on the path of holiness with the Lord’s help, especially by actually receiving his real presence in the Holy Eucharist, the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

The Roman Catechism states, “The Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: ‘Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking.’” (#1327) Our call is to be what we receive; the Body and Blood of Christ.

This habit is perfectly placed in this month of April as we celebrate First Communion at St. Sebastian Parish on April 7th and at St. John the Baptist Parish on April 14th. Both services are held at 12:30 p.m. Come and join them and their families if you can, as we can learn so much from the first communicants. Their excitement of receiving the Lord in Holy Eucharist for the first time is contagious. I always learn so much from them, as I do not want to lose that excitement and reverence for receiving the Holy Eucharist. They need our support as well.

We need to move our attitude from going to Mass on the weekend from “do I have to!?” to realistically “lucky me!” all based on the Lord coming directly to us in the Holy Eucharist. We did not earn this gift, it is freely given to us by the Lord and why He told us “to do this” because He wants to be there for us in this special way, as our strength and nourishment.

So I invite you to adopt a Faith Habit – and as you live that habit the other six habits will also grow.

I thank Deacon Rich Matuszak, Deacon Paul Grimm, Mary Carter and Pat Posbrig for their reflections on the monthly Faith Habits and thank them for their service to our two parishes.

Fr. Bob Kabat

