



## Shepherd's Corner

10 Oct 2021

Dear Parishioners,

Today is the annual exhortation regarding the reception of Holy Communion. There are many new people with us. Please bear with me if this is repetitious.

The reception of Holy Communion is done at the Rail. The rail forms the threshold between the nave and the sanctuary. It is, symbolically, the threshold between earth and heaven, between time and eternity. Earth is where we currently dwell, heaven is where we are pointing. Heaven is where God dwells. During Mass, we are witnesses to and participants of the eternal sacrifice which the Son of God offers to his Father, with the assistance of all the angels and saints.

We

participate in heavenly things despite not being in heaven. At Communion time, though, we approach the rail. God meets us there and, at the hands of His ordained priest, pierces the barrier, crosses the threshold from heaven to earth, from eternity into time. He feeds us His own body and blood, bread from heaven, as

nourishment for our pilgrimage.

We approach the rail at His invitation. He has initiated and we have responded. We are receiving what He is offering. Therefore, we should receive humbly, and passively. Please excuse the graphic language but we need to be practical.

Firstly, please lift your chin. How much? Pointing to the floor is not enough; looking at the ceiling is too much; halfway is perfect.

Secondly, please open your mouth. How much? All the way is too much; ½ inch is not enough; halfway is perfect.

Thirdly, please stick out our tongue. How much? Behind your teeth is not enough; all the way is too much; halfway is perfect. Form a landing pad with your tongue relaxed so that it is flat and horizontal; not tense, curled up, or pointing down.

Fourthly, please close your eyes, at least when the priest arrives. This is the single most important factor to avoid moving around, that is, being a grabber, snapper, lungers or biter. The priest needs your landing pad to be motionless. God has come all the way from heaven; He does not need your help for the last 6 inches of the journey! Close your eyes and receive passively what God is graciously offering.

Most of you receive Holy Communion flawlessly already. Some are still learning. All together, receiving is easy. Unless we are in some way physically handicapped, it requires no tension, straining or stretching. If you are not relaxed, something's wrong.

Let us pray for each other in these troubled times. Thank you for your material and spiritual support of the parish. May God reward you.

- Fr. Novokowsky, FSSP