



By Pat Haggerty

The month of May brings with it many things. We see many transformations in nature---beautiful flowers of myriad colors, greener vegetation and more verdant landscapes. We hear more chirping birds, feel more gentle breezes and sense a stronger presence of the sun and its warmth.

May also means more events to cherish---Mother's Day, Memorial Day, graduations and First Communions. It is the latter that I want to focus on. My grandson will be making his First Communion and it has caused me to reflect. It has brought me back to my own First Communion at St. Anthony's Church. I still have a picture of me standing in front of the altar, hands clasped in prayer wearing my white dress and veil. There are moments of that day that I remember distinctly. I can recall processing into the church from the school, and I can remember going back to church in the afternoon to get our scapulars. It must have been a part of the ceremony in the 50's to get scapulars to mark our devotion to Mary.

Perhaps your First Communion wasn't as long ago as mine. What do you remember about the day? Do you remember a feeling of anticipation over your reception of the Eucharist? Does a particular moment stand out for you? Do you remember anything about the Mass that day? Think back.

When I try to make the connection between my First Communion and that of my grandson, I feel a sense of connection and wonder. He will now be connected to the family of God in a

special way. He can now “come to the table” and receive our Lord. He will participate in the banquet that is so special to us and so important. It is the life-giving banquet in which we receive Jesus our Savior. It is the feast that we carry on from the Last Supper: “do this in remembrance of me.” How amazing is that!

The responsorial psalm for First Communion is Psalm 116. We intone, “Our blessing cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.” Reflect on what that really means. We are blessed by our reception of the cup and we are united with Christ in that meaningful act. That is a powerful statement.

In a much more simplistic way, a song comes to mind as I reflect on what Holy Communion is. It is a song Mr. Labrie taught our youth choir. It is called “Little White Guest”: You have come to my heart, dearest Jesus. I’m holding you close to my breast. I’m telling you over and over. You are welcome, oh, little white guest.

Let us welcome Jesus into our hearts as our little white guest every time we receive Him. Let us allow him to nourish us and transform us.