

Eucharist: "Just grab a cookie and run?"

That is what a fellow said to Father Larry Dorsey when we first went to St. Gerald's as Co-Pastors and we had multiple masses with short time between, and people had to rush to get out of the parking lot. That problem has been solved with the beautiful new church at 96th and Q in Omaha.

Rush! FAST Food! Grab the cookie and run! It is the culture. And if we are into that mode completely, can we ever understand Eucharist? It is problematic because Eucharist is meant to be a conversational meal!

And a meal for "Hail, hail! the gangs all here!"

Jesus broke all the rules for his day because he shared meals with people he should not have been eating with: tax collectors, Pharisees, and at the multiplication of the loaves: men and WOMEN!

THAT JUST WAS NOT DONE IN HIS TIME AND CULTURE.

SO WHAT ABOUT OUR TIME? It seems we want to put high fences around our altars. No inter-communion for baptized Protestants. Is that in the style of Jesus?

Several years ago on shipboard, I announced I was having mass in a room and anyone was welcome; First to show up early was a lovely sixteen year old Protestant who proclaimed: "I've never been to a Catholic Mass before and I am so happy you invited me."

So now, what do I say about receiving Holy Communion?

"BUT YOU CANNOT RECEIVE COMMUNION, OF COURSE!.....?"

No.

Instead I said: "Now Catholics believe when they receive the holy bread, they have an encounter with Jesus. If you do not believe that, then do not receive.

But if you believe that, then receive."

She made her first communion that day.

(If you want to read a very interesting talk by a Catholic theologian on this topic, Google:

"The Meal Ministry of Jesus" by Rev. Michael Jancas)

So on this feast we can pray with St. Thomas:

O Holy Banquet

in which Christ is received.

The soul is filled with grace,

and there is given to us a pledge of future glory.