



From A Bishop's Journal (759)

Wonderful Witnesses (1)

In the pastoral letter I published in May, I marvelled at the fact that we have parents and friends who “have a taste for the Eucharist” and who are committed to preparing the children to make their first communion.

An Invitation to the Lord's Supper

When I accepted to be a catechist three years ago, I could not imagine what beautiful project I had gotten into. The desire to learn that these children had, and the discussions we had in our little group, at each meeting, are very beneficial to both the children and me. Each one has input in the meeting, regarding the topic of discussion, and together we develop stories and scenarios, and we have drawings based on everything in their heads. It is important for me to introduce them to Jesus Christ, that they know with certainty that he is always there for us. The Eucharist is, for me, an invitation to the table of the Lord. It is one way of offering thanksgiving and of feeling that he is really in us. This is the message I would like our children to remember. With our new programme, it is very good for the children to look at the pictures and read the different stories related to the theme at hand. We share together about their prayer corner, pictures of their baptism, and the fact that they will soon have pictures of their First Communion. They are very anxious for it since for them, coming up with the adults and share with Jesus is a very important step that makes them a little taller.

– *Lyne*

Very Special Gifts

It is the first time this year that I teach Level Three. I have twelve little ones in my group, they are super good, and they are interested in their catechesis. The first steps are devoted to God the Father who gave us the gift of the earth. These first lessons make us see that two other gifts will be given to us this year, since we are to receive two sacraments, those of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. I shall teach my children that the sacraments are very special gifts that God gives us to help us live as Christians. To initiate the children to the sacrament of the Eucharist, I shall stress the importance of living this sacrament, because Christ gives himself to us wholeheartedly, in the bread and the wine. He gives himself to us as food that helps us grow, act, and love as Christ does. In order to bring home to them the importance of receiving the bread of life, I shall draw the comparison that it is

important to nourish the body if we are to be healthy. I shall tell them that it is the same with God, He gives himself to us as food for nourishment, to give us the strength to be like Him. I shall insist on the importance of attending Sunday Mass. Sunday is a special day when we gather together in church to listen to the Word of God and share the meal of the Lord as we receive the bread of life. I think that my children are given a rare privilege in receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist at this time when we celebrate this year the International Eucharistic Congress. I turn to God the Father to guide me through the Third Level, to prepare these little ones as best as possible for the sacraments they are to receive this year.

– *Mona*

A Banquet

To receive the Eucharist is to answer Jesus' invitation to gather together for a banquet. Yes, it is Jesus himself who invites us to his meal. He invites all his friends, young and old, to share together the good bread of his word. The word that Jesus gives us is his assurance of how he loves us and how he wants us to be friends with each other. He also tells us that God our Father loves us very much, and it is this same love that we give to others. Besides telling us of his love, Jesus offers us his body and blood, and his very life. In the same way, we can be in communion with him and know that he is present in us every moment of our lives. When we go to church we join our friends, brothers and sisters to tell God our Father that we are happy to be friends with Jesus and that we want to live with the others when things go well and when they don't, because we know that Jesus helps his friends when he is asked. When we say that the Eucharist is a sacrament, we say that Jesus calls us, that he waves at us, that he hugs us in his arms. Jesus says that he wants us to be happy, and he gives us the tools we need for living in his joy, a joy we share with others. "Thank you, Jesus, for your presence, with your Father and the Spirit of love who enlightens us and warms our hearts."

– *Pierre*

Enthused at Doing Catechetics

As facilitator for Level Three for grade 3 students, I never would have thought that I could have become enthused by this. A high school teacher at heart, I have always been passionate about teaching and giving our children what is best, by giving them the tools necessary for success and for their well-being. Now I can get a further grand experience with seven and eight year-olds. There is nothing cooler than this! First of all, I am delighted by the fact of being able to address all these little faces filled with enthusiasm and a desire to get to know Jesus better. Their amusing and spontaneous comments bring liveliness to our get-togethers. The opportunity of spending quality time with these unsophisticated and affectionate children fills me with joy. They are an undeniable gift to the animators. In order to involve them actively in the group, the participation of the main actors is required. This is why we have them do mimes and colourful sketches on the exciting texts that are in our programme. Through the pleasant exchanges between the students and their animators, the fun activities and wonderful discoveries, we give our children the desire to reach beyond themselves, to enrich their knowledge, and to desire the Eucharist and deepen their faith. The fact of enjoying being with them at these special times adds a touch of magic, and because of our example the children want to come and share with us. They are so eager to attend these meetings that at the very moment the magic is there, we know with certainty that we have attained our objective. We are all

bound together with love, and it is through activities that draw the children that we invite them to welcome the mystery of faith, the word of God, and to love the earth as Jesus did: all of these treasures are buried for life deep within their little hearts. Together we make a difference! Is there no greater gift to offer than to love one another in faith, and to enjoy oneself? “Dream like you never have, with the aim of realising a few of them” (Jacques Brel).

– *Martine*

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