

Copyright © 2014 Pamela Patnode

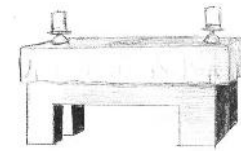
No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written consent of the copyright owner. Requests to publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permission Department at Philomena Press.

Philomena Press LLC
6569 Garland Lane N.
Minneapolis, MN 55311

A Communion of the Heart

Written by: Pamela Patnode

Illustrated by: Austin Duncan



Chapter One
Did You See That?

“Did you see that guy during Communion?”
asked Grace’s older brother, J.P.

Eight-year-old Grace O’Malley enjoyed these car rides with her family. With four older siblings who were active in many activities, it was rare to find the entire family all together in one vehicle. Often some were in one car driving

to one set of activities, while others headed in a different direction for their own practices, games, lessons, and meetings. Mass, however, was a top priority for the family and they made every effort to attend the Sunday Celebration together.

Grace's family loved the parish community of St. John's Catholic Church. As active members of the parish, Grace felt at home among the people and surroundings of St. John's. Not only did Grace's family attend Mass on Sundays, but they also participated in many church activities throughout the week. This familiarity with St. John's caused Grace and her siblings to notice the newcomer and

watch with curiosity and interest as the stranger received the Eucharist.

"Do you mean the man who received Communion while kneeling on both knees?" questioned the O'Malley's middle child, Lorraine.

"I saw him," answered nine-year-old Kathleen. "I thought he looked like he was from a different country."

"I saw him, too" replied Grace. "Why did he receive communion like that?"

"I think he was just being really reverent," responded thirteen-year-old Marie.

"I've never seen anyone do that before," exclaimed Lorraine.

“Oh I have,” stated J.P. “Marie’s right. That guy was just being reverent.”

“What’s reverent?” asked Grace.

“It means that you’re trying to show a lot of respect for Jesus,” explained Marie.

Impressed, Grace admired her brother and older sister. She was surprised that they had seen someone receive Communion like that before and that they understood why.

“Mom,” asked a concerned Lorraine, “Should we be receiving Communion on our knees? I mean, does Jesus think we’re not reverent if we receive the Eucharist while standing? Does anyone in our country receive Communion that way?”

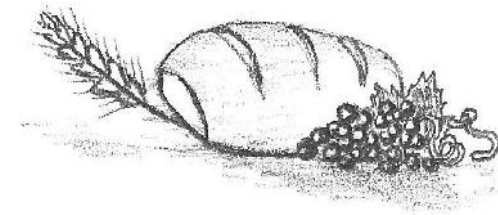
“When I made my First Communion,” interrupted Kathleen, “our Faith Formation director told us to stand up and either use one of our hands to make a ‘throne’ for Jesus, or to receive the Consecrated Host on our tongue. No one ever told me I was supposed to kneel on both knees to receive it.”

“Yeah!” interjected Lorraine. “And what about Grandma? She wouldn’t be able to kneel. What should she do?”

“Hold on, hold on everyone,” replied their Mom. “There’s no need to worry about Grandma. Your Faith Formation instructors gave you good instructions for the way we should be receiving Christ in Holy Communion.

As far as the visitor we saw today, to tell you the truth, I've seen people receive the Eucharist using many different postures. Like you, I've seen people receive our Lord while standing, making one of their hands a 'throne' as you mentioned Kathleen, as well as on the tongue. I've seen people genuflect before receiving our Lord and I've seen people kneel as the gentleman did today at Mass. And yet, I've never actually asked anyone why they receive Communion using the method that they choose. I believe J.P. and Marie are right in suggesting that the man today was simply expressing his love and humility before Christ. But, I think it would be fun to learn more about

this. The gestures we use when we worship are very important and are steeped in meaningful tradition. Let's look into this further and see what we can learn."



J.P. and Marie exchanged smirks and rolled their eyes. They were used to their mother always wanting to uncover the answers to religious questions. Grace, however, wanted to know more. Her very own First Holy

Communion was fast approaching and she wanted to know the right way to do it. *What if St. John's is doing it wrong?* worried Grace. *Does Jesus prefer that we receive Holy Communion a certain way? What is the right way to receive Communion?*



Chapter Two ***A Letter to the Pope***

Grace awoke the next morning and hastily scampered out of bed. She lifted the shade and eagerly peered out of the window.

“Did it snow?” asked her sister, Kathleen.

“Yes!” Grace joyfully exclaimed.

“A lot?” asked Kathleen, hope rising within her.