

Miss the Novena yesterday? Then start tomorrow morning with Mass.

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Deceased: Elick Lowitz - a
benefactor. Ill: sister
of benefactor. Ill: sister
of Fr. Frank Cavanaugh, CSC.

On Receiving Communion Daily

Somewhere, not long ago, a story appeared regarding a Russian scientist who planted a willow wand weighing five pounds in a container with exactly 200 pounds of good soil. This he did as an experiment. And for five years he watered the sapling regularly. At the end of this period, he removed the small tree from the soil, shook loose the dirt from the roots, and then weighed the willow. The verdict -- 169 pounds. Yet, the original 200 pounds of soil had diminished by only three ounces. How was this difference in weight to be explained? By the soil? Hardly. Because the soil had lost only three ounces of its original mass.

We are told that the difference was explained by invisible energy radiating from the sun. The leaves of the small willow were the means which contacted this vast source of energy. Daily contact had enabled the willow to absorb tremendous amounts of this energy, thus transforming it into a sturdy sapling in five short years.

There is something akin to this same miracle which takes place in every one of us through the reception of daily Communion. We, too have our roots planted firmly in the earth, yet we grow spiritually in strength and stature from a nourishment which only God Himself could have invented. As members of the Mystical Body, we reach out, like the leaves of the tree, for an energy that is the Son of God in His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity -- nothing less!

This tremendous truth is so startling that it deserves an occasional reminder -- even to that group of Catholics born into the Faith. It is good to recall the power of the Holy Eucharist -- that it can transform a Saul into a Paul, a sinner into a saint.

When we receive Communion, we receive not simply a figure, a symbol or sign of Our Lord, but Christ Himself. Our heart becomes a cradle for the Babe of Bethlehem -- we speak directly to the Child of Nazareth -- we listen to the words whispered by the Preacher of the Sermon on the Mount -- we sit at the table in the Upper Room in company with the Twelve Apostles, and watch Him break bread and distribute it to all present -- we look up at the sorrowful sight of the Saviour crucified on Calvary -- watch His triumphant progress of Easter... All this takes place when we go to the communion rail and receive the little white host from the hands of the priest.

At that moment, God is closer to us than He was to any of those who witnessed the original scenes mentioned above -- except the Last Supper, because they, too, received the same Lord and Saviour under the appearances of bread and wine. The difference lies only in the fact that the witnesses felt the sensible presence of God. The Blessed Mother, the Apostles, the multitude saw Him "face to face." We see Him only through the eyes of Faith.

Yet, even the Apostles had to exercise some faith in His divinity when they beheld Him breaking the bread and saying: "This is My Body."

Anyone with even a little faith in what happens when we receive Communion can hardly leave the chapel before making a show of wonder, and reverence in his thanksgiving -- a thanksgiving that looms important enough to claim ten minutes of our time even on our busiest days. This is the choicest privilege granted to all Notre Dame men every day of their lives on this campus dedicated to His Mother. And if He can "make snowflakes from drops of water, diamonds out of charcoal, saints out of Magdalenes -- what can't He do for you!"