A Pilgrim’s Progress 5-2-AD 2021

Five weeks from today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Corpus Christi. Our Corpus Christi procession will follow our 8:00 A.M. mass at IC. Hopefully today’s First Communicants will return to lead our procession.

Corpus Christi is also the day we will begin to use our Communion Rail during our weekend masses. Our practice for receiving Holy Communion will follow the same flow in two lines down the center aisle. Reaching the end of the aisle each Communicant will come to the first open space at the rail on either side. Communicants may stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion. You may receive either in the hand or on the tongue. After receiving, the Communicant returns to their pew for your post-Communion mediation. The priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister of the Holy Eucharist will come to each Communicant at their place at the rail.

A short video from the Basilica of St Mary in Alexandria, Va. demonstrates this procedure very well. It is available at Youtube Communion Rail How to tutorial. And on our parish website and social media. I recommend it for your viewing.

As I wrote in this space in December receiving the Holy Eucharist by kneeling at the altar rail is not a defining measure of our holiness, love for Christ, or Eucharistic devotion. It is a very appropriate way (when possible) to express our belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Just as the priest kneels (or bows) before receiving the Holy Eucharist at the altar, all the faithful may do the same at the Communion Rail (which is seen as an extension of the altar).

I hope to begin the use of the altar rail for receiving Holy Communion at daily masses this week.

Deo Vindice, fr john