



Dear 2020

**First Communicants,
parents and catechists,**

These past weeks we have been pretty hungry: Hungry for human contact; to re-connect with family and friends beyond the four walls we've been confined behind. Pope Benedict XVI makes a point that goes right to the heart of our experience.

We need in our lives the presence of what is real and permanent so that we can approach it. Without that presence, life becomes hard to face. We lose direction. We live a kind of cowering and chaos.

Some years ago, when I was in India one evening I spotted a stray puppy in front of our monastery. A beautiful three-month-old mongrel that had been abused and abandoned. She had dirt and mud all over and was trembling with fear. I was thinking how can I get her to trust me? The pup was right there on our doorstep. From my place down the hall, I called to the little dog. At that moment the pup was faced with a drastic choice: She could either remain outside in the lonely and terrifying darkness, or she could heed the unseen, tender voice that was calling her inside. The puppy came lurching in. With that, we instantly became fast friends. The puppy stopped being skittish and suspicious. She grew playful and affectionate with others as well. And all because she dared to approach a presence that beckoned her in the darkness.

In these challenging times we are not in a position to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus as planned. But the Feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (Corpus Christi) tells us that Jesus in the Eucharist is that real and permanent presence that we can approach. He beckons to us from the silence of the Eucharist because he knows that we

cannot be ourselves without his presence to help us. We need a presence that will take us by the hand and lead us out of our isolation and misery. Only a presence—Christ's presence—can reawaken our self, our "I," and give us the courage and desire to live our life to its fullest. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist saves us from the dread and decay of ourselves. We are made for this presence. As we are reopening our church, **Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the real and permanent presence that we can approach in the hope of being transformed, healed and forever changed.**

A special thank you to all parents, catechists and all others who assist in the formation and preparation of all the 2020 First Holy Communicants!

**I miss you friends, we all do.
You are deeply loved, deeply valued,
deeply important.**

**You matter and the world is better with
you in it.
Love to you.**

Be assured of my love and prayers,
As I would appreciate yours.
Fr. George Koloth CP