

First Eucharist: April 23/24, 2022

JESUS IS THE BREAD & BREATH OF LIFE

John 20:19-31

What a joy to be with you today during this Easter Season to share in your First Holy Communion. When Jesus appeared to his disciples after his Resurrection, he offered them a greeting. In fact, in the gospel story we just heard, he repeated the same greeting three times? What was it? [*Peace be with you!*] Isn't that the same greeting that we offer one another at Mass? Then, Jesus did something which seemed a little strange to me. Did it seem strange to you? [*He breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit."*] Why? What was Jesus trying to do by breathing on the disciples?



Our breath is very important; it's what keeps us alive. You can go weeks without eating food and you can go days without drinking water, but you can't even go a few minutes without breathing. But we don't usually pay much attention to our breathing. It happens automatically. When you've been in a swimming pool, did you ever see how long you can hold your breath underwater? After a few moments, you jump right up to catch your breath.

Without breath you can't inflate a balloon, or play a flute. Our breath is like the wind.



Without wind, a kite won't fly and a windmill won't turn to produce energy; a sailboat will be stuck on the water and won't move if there's no wind in the sails, and you can't go windsurfing without wind to push you on the water. Our breath, like the wind, is an important source of life and energy.

Your grandparents know a song that we used to sing many years ago: *The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind...* Jesus is our answer to life's questions and He is the One who is the source of our life and energy. Jesus wanted to share his very life with his friends and so he "breathed on them" and shared his Spirit with them. Jesus wanted them to live well and so he gave them his peace: "Peace be with you."

In the very first book of the Bible, the Book of Genesis, we read the story about how the world was made. After God created the light and the dark, the sun and the moon and the stars; after he formed the mountains and hills and all things that grow and all the animals of the earth, God formed us last of all. *GOD formed Man out of soil from the ground and blew into his nose the breath of life. The Man came alive—a living soul!*



his friends: *I am the BREAD of Life. Today we can also say: Jesus is the BREATH of Life – the life that he shares with each of you.*

Father John

Today, Jesus wants to be with you in a special way and share his life and Spirit with all of you. So, we remember what he did on the night before he left his friends. He gave them a special way to remember Him. He took some bread and wine and blessed it. As he gave it to them, he said: *Here, share this bread. This is my very life for you. This cup is my life-blood given to you. Whenever you share this meal, remember me!* Each time we come to receive Communion, we listen to the Word of God in the Bible. Then, through the meal we share together and the presence of one another in the community of the Church, we breathe in the breath of Jesus so we can breathe life into others every day.



May you come to life in wonderful ways as you share your First Holy Communion... being a peacemaker.... being a friend.... being kind and forgiving... taking care of our good earth; looking out for others, not just for yourself... knowing that with every breath you breathe the Spirit of Jesus is with you and within you. Jesus told