

As we celebrate Tyler and Anthony's first communion, it's significant that our readings focus on the Eucharist. In our gospel reading today, Jesus tells us: "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never hunger, whoever believes in me will never thirst." This is not only a reference to the Eucharist, but it is also a challenge from Jesus for us to be open to the world of possibilities rather than being limited by our own expectations or sense of reality. With God, all things are possible.

In last week's gospel, the story of the loaves and fishes, Jesus' desire to feed the crowd is met with hesitation and resistance from his disciples. They told Jesus that it would be impossible to find enough resources or supplies to feed the crowd, but their limited view was simply misguided. After having had spent so much time with Jesus, seeing him cure the sick, raise the dead, and touch the lives of so many people, the disciples still had difficulty being open to the world of possibilities that Jesus offered. The disciples were trapped, as many of us are, in self-imposed limitations. Like the disciples, how often do we limit ourselves and fail to be open to the unexpected?

A question for each of us, and specifically for you Anthony and Tyler, is what is holding you back from receiving and sharing God's love? How are we limiting ourselves from receiving and sharing the healing touch of God? The Eucharist is not about blindly eating a little piece of bread or drinking from a glass of wine. It is so much more important. When we come to this table to eat, we are nourished in both body and mind. We are fed from Jesus' own body and blood. Every time we receive the Eucharist it is an opportunity for us to be transformed; to be touched and to be healed.

Now when I talk about being open to the world of possibilities, I'm not talking about magic tricks or material gain. I'm talking about believing that we can be better; we can make a difference in the world and in the lives of our sisters and brothers. We can impact the world in exciting and unexpected ways when we believe in God's ability to work in and through us.

The Eucharist is a celebration, a commemoration of the life of Jesus. In fact, Jesus told us that he wanted to be remembered in the breaking of bread. At the last supper, Jesus said: "When you gather in my name, do this in memory of me." After the resurrection, when the disciples were walking on the road to Emmaus, it was in the breaking of the bread that they recognized Jesus. The Eucharist is the center of our faith; it is our opportunity to be nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ. That is an awesome Gift for us from God – to be nourished by God's own Body.

When we look at all the problems in our world and in our own lives, it is so easy to lose hope. We are a divided and fractured people. In this world war and famine, inequality and cruelty, and violence and anger abound. It is easy to lose hope, to feel like we are helpless or that we can only make an insignificant difference. But with Jesus, we are not limited to our own vision or our own power. We don't have to limit our expectations of whether the hungry of our world can be fed, whether we can eliminate war, whether prejudice and racism and discrimination can be overcome, whether women can achieve equality - and most of all, whether you and I can have a part in making any of this happen. With God all things are possible.

When we look back to the people in today's gospel, their fundamental mistake was that they didn't include God in the equation. When it comes to being a better person; when it comes to healing relationships; when it comes to doing better at our job, our diet, our marriage or relationships, raising our children or listening to our parents; when it comes to helping to make our city a better city, our parish a better parish, our school a better school; when it comes to caring for the poor, helping to build a peaceful world, if we put God in the equation we can go way beyond the limitations of human expectations. The truth is, God is already in the equation, because God gave us Jesus to bring peace, justice, and wholeness. God has poured the Holy Spirit upon us to share in that work. Claim that gift and let it transform you. Listen as God calls your name and invites you to trust in that love and peace that only God can give.

My friends, God is calling us to something more. Tyler and Anthony, as you receive your first Communion today, know that God loves you and expects you to make a difference in this world. Don't limit yourself by what other people think or say and don't think negative things about yourself. God created you, and all of us, to be exactly who we are, a precious child of God. As we receive this Eucharist, let it make us strong in faith and action. With God's help we can do anything. When you face challenges in life, when you experience doubt, when you feel alone, remember the words: "Si Se Puedo" – Yes, I can! Believe in the power of love, believe in God's transforming love. Eat at this table and be fed with the Life-giving Bread that comes to us in the Body and Blood of Jesus. Jesus is telling us trust in me and together we will do great things.