

## **Why I Am Catholic**

### **First Communion!**

Today we celebrate seven first communions. I still remember my First Communion like it was yesterday. I couldn't even wait until Sunday; I convinced my parents and the religious education director to allow me to make my First Communion at a weeknight mass in the parish chapel. It is one of those indelible memories and I pray it will be for our new communicants.

Up until about 100 years ago, First Communion was usually received later—most often in the teenage years. St. Pope Pius X (1903-1914) restored the practice of allowing those who had reached the "age of reason"—usually around seven or eight—to receive their First Communion.

The *Code of Canon Law* requires that: "they have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so that they understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity and are able to receive the body of Christ with faith and devotion." (Can. 913)

Today they participate in the wedding feast of Heaven for the first time. St. Pope Pius X was known to say: "Holy Communion is the shortest and safest way to Heaven." (*Wikipedia*)