

DEAR DEACON

❖ Question

Dear Deacon Jim,

Often when I go to Communion, I ask Jesus to give the grace I receive from the sacrament to people that need it. For example, maybe I will ask for a friend that has lost a loved one to lessen their grief or for someone that is struggling with life to find answers to their problems. Is this an acceptable thing to do? My wife thinks it doesn't work that way. What is the Catholic faith's view on this?

❖ Response

Although this is an admirable gesture stressing the importance of a request for someone else, I would say it would be **problematic to do so when receiving Holy Communion**. That would mean that we would be asking God to transfer to someone else the value of one's preparation and thanksgiving after Communion. **What cannot be transferred are the principal effects by the communicant of the sacrament of the Eucharist, specifically sanctifying grace, and the remission of the temporal punishment due to forgiven sins.**

We certainly please God when receiving Holy Communion worthily and I believe it gives one the basis for asking God a specific favor to bless a friend, to lessen their grief, or whatever the specific favor is being asked of God. As an example, *Lord, if I have pleased you by receiving you in Communion, please*" In this way, we would not disregard God's will providing the principal effects of obtaining HIS grace when we receive Communion. If we offer our Communion and understand in this sense knowing that grace cannot be transferred then asking for a favor is not problematic. However, as indicated previously above we cannot direct the grace we receive from God's grace to somebody else. If that is the intent, then your wife is correct that it doesn't work that way.

Deacon Jim