

little babies, just after Baptism, were taken up to the altar and given a sip of the Precious Blood. Do you suppose the Fathers, who approved of that custom of giving Communion to babies in arms, did not know their Christian Doctrine as well as ourselves? And what can a babe in arms understand of Holy Communion? And yet I assure you, that if only those little babes were baptized, and swallowed one drop of that Precious Blood, they received an increase of sanctifying grace in their souls, as surely as did the greatest saint who ever went to Communion."

"Well, I declare!" cried Mrs. Mary. Babies in arms? I never heard of such a thing! And do you say that they truly received the good of the Sacrament?"

"They undoubtedly did!" answered Father Carson, with emphasis. "And why shouldn't they, pray? Is there anyone in the world more innocent than a little child? And all that one needs to receive a fruitful Holy Communion, is to be baptized and in the state of grace, and to swallow the Sacred Species of the Sacrament."

"Even if one doesn't know what he is doing?" gasped Mrs. Mary.

"Even if one doesn't know what he is doing!" affirmed Father Carson. "The one only thing absolutely necessary is,—the state of grace. True, if one has the use of reason, there must be some intention to receive the Sacrament,—but supposing this, the one thing necessary is—the state of grace."

"But how can that be!" cried Mrs. Mary. "I always thought that a good preparation was so necessary, to receive Holy Communion fruitfully."

"All we grown-ups," answered Father Carson, "owe it to our Eucharistic Lord, to make ready for Him with all the reverence and love we can, when he visits us in the Blessed Eucharist. And this preparation surely opens a wider door to the grace of the Sacrament. The better we prepare, the more grace we receive. But so long as we are in the state of grace, and have a good intention, the door is open wide enough for grace to enter in. Our Lord can come fruitfully into our souls. And the reason