

St. Therese's little way: Taking up the bread and wine

At the end of a wonderful weekend at the beach, just before we left Ocean City, Md., we walked into church for Sunday Mass. A smiling usher approached us.

"I need two young men to take up the gifts," he said.

I knew which two young men he meant, and they were at my side.

One was excited, and one was nervous. But we persuaded the one who was nervous that it would be fine. They discussed whether to genuflect or bow after handing the bread and wine to the priest.

It was obviously important.

When the first collection ended, our sons met the usher at the back of the church and solemnly, proudly carried the bread and wine to the altar.

Then they bowed and walked back to our pew.



Carrying the bread and wine to the altar is such a small thing to do—just a tiny step when you consider that the bread and wine then becomes the Body and Blood and Divinity of Jesus Christ. The task our sons performed only took a minute or two.

But it was important for them. It felt important to us, their parents. And it was amazing to me to see these two boys who can be so silly together handle the task

with reverence. That was a gift in and of itself.

It struck me that it happened on the day before the feast of St. Therese of Lisieux. St. Therese was known for her little way, for trying to make sure her small actions were done with great love.

“Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God,” she said. “Do all that you do with love.”

Few of us will be doing big things on an ordinary October Monday. Still, perhaps we can embrace St. Therese’s little way and try to accomplish whatever tasks we do take on with love.