

# The perfect Communion gift

I recently had the honor of attending the first Holy Communion at St. Margaret in Bel Air for a very close family friend (who happens to be one of my current students at St. Joan of Arc School in Aberdeen).

The young man of honor, Danny, is bright, full of energy and always eager to help his teachers. He hugs me every time I see him in the hallway and is the first person to fix my projector when it fails to serve its duty. Everyone has taken notice of his benevolence and intelligence, particularly his grandparents, who were visiting from both Texas and Pennsylvania on this gorgeous and momentous day.

After reading each card he received for his first Communion, Danny hugged those who gave them to him. Then he hugged the gift-givers again after opening presents that included a splendid cache of religious books, pieces of jewelry and keepsake items.

It was the last present from his Pennsylvania grandparents that gave everyone in the room goosebumps.

Danny's grandfather presented him with a black-and-silver lock box and began to read to him:

*This is a real chalice given to you on your first Holy Communion with the intention that if God calls you to the priesthood you will be able to really use it during the Holy Mass. If not, you can gift or lend it to the priest who celebrates your wedding and use it at your wedding Mass. If you keep it, then gift it to your son at his first Holy Communion as Grandpa and Grandma did to you in the hope that you or one of your sons would become a priest.*

*Loving God,*

*In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your spirit to our young grandson, Danny, so that maybe he will respond to your call to service and leadership in the Church. However, if his vocation is to marriage, where he will live his call to holiness, let him then with his love and example lead his family to heaven.*

*Let this chalice be part of a legacy that never waivers! Always follow your Lord and you will have an abundant life, so very precious!*

*This is a blessed chalice - set it in a place of honor and do not drink from it, except at Mass.*

*If ever you must give it up, give it to a priest.*

*Love and Prayers,*

*Grandma and Grandpa*

Inside the box was a gorgeous golden chalice and paten. The pair set the room aglow and elicited a resounding applause and more than a handful of joyous tears.

Even now as I write this, I am overwhelmed by the radiance of this sacred gift. It has inspired me to consider offering the invitation to vocations to each of my children as they proceed the course of their sacraments of invitation. This would be a wonderful tradition to start in Catholic families in the hopes that more of our children are called to serve as priests, nuns, brothers and deacons.

As for Danny, I cannot think of a young man more suited for the role. He demonstrates great love for the Lord in his words and actions and profound faith. It was an honor to be a part of his special day and is a blessing to watch him grow up. May God bless Danny and his chalice on his sacramental journey, wherever it may

lead them.