

Holy Communion

RULES AND PRACTICES

Catholics follow these rules and practices to show respect for the Eucharist:

- ✠ To receive Holy Communion, we must be free from mortal sin. When we have contrition, receiving Holy Communion frees us from venial sin.
- ✠ To honor the Lord, we fast for one hour before receiving Communion. We go without food or drink, except water or medicine.
- ✠ Catholics are required to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, if possible during Easter time. But we are encouraged to receive Communion every week when we participate in the Mass.
- ✠ Catholics are permitted to receive Communion at a second Mass on the same day.

HOW TO RECEIVE COMMUNION

When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we welcome Him with our whole bodies, minds, and spirits. Here are steps to follow when you receive Communion:

- ✠ Fold your hands, and join in singing the communion hymn as you walk to the altar.
- ✠ When it is your turn, bow your head as the minister says, “The Body of Christ”. Try not to bow to the back of the person ahead of you in line. (Bowing our heads is a common sign of reverence recently designated by the United States Bishops.)
- ✠ You can receive the consecrated Host in your hand or on your tongue. To receive in your hand, hold your hands out, palm-side up. Place one hand underneath the other and cup your hands slightly. To receive the Host on your tongue, fold your hands, and open your mouth, putting your tongue out.
- ✠ After receiving the host, step aside and stop. If you have received the Host in your hand, carefully take it from your palm, and put it in your mouth. Chew and swallow the Host.
- ✠ You may also be offered Communion from the cup. After swallowing the host, walk to where the cup is offered. The priest or minister says, “The Blood of Christ.” Again, bow your head as he/she says these words, or as you answer “Amen.”
- ✠ Take the cup from the priest, deacon, or minister using both hands. Take a small sip, and carefully hand the cup back.
- ✠ Quietly return to your place. Pray a prayer of thanksgiving.

