

# Preparing for my First Communion



ST. HELENA CATHOLIC CHURCH  
*Religious Education*

# What children should know before the reception of First Holy Communion?



- **Church Etiquette**
  - Genuflect before the tabernacle; bow before the crucifix and altar
  - Speak and walk reverently
  - Sign of the Cross with Holy Water and what it means (remembrance of baptism)
  - Put Song books back where they belong, do not leave trash in the pews
  - Do not eat, drink or chew gum in church
  - Do not use your phone or anything that will distract you from Jesus and the Mass
  - Celebrate the entire Mass – from the Gathering song through the final blessing
- **General Knowledge of Jesus**
  - He is present in the Eucharist
  - Jesus is the Son of God
  - Who his parents were (Mary and Joseph)
  - He worked miracles
  - He died and rose from the dead (Easter)
  - Last Supper:
    - Does bread and wine change? (Yes! Into the Body and Blood of Christ)
    - How can we be sure?
      - By our faith
      - Jesus said “This is my body... This is my blood...”
- **Advent**
  - Beginning of the Church year
  - Preparation for Christmas
  - 4 weeks long
  - Symbolism of the Advent Wreath
- **Lent**
  - Ash Wednesday (First day of Lent)
  - Preparation for Holy Week and Easter

- **Should be attending Sunday/Saturday Vigil Mass on a weekly basis**
- **Know what the inside of the Church looks like**
  - Altar
  - Crucifix
  - Processional Cross
  - Sanctuary
  - Tabernacle
  - Sanctuary Light
  - Station of the Cross
  - Holy Water Font
  - Baptismal Font
  - Statues
  - Ambo
  - Chair of the Procerder
  - Stain Glass
  - Vestry
  - Sacristy
  - Chapel
  - Cry Room
  - Monstrance

- **Vestments & Seasons**

**VESTMENT**

Alb  
Chasuble

Cassock  
Stole

**COLOR**

White  
**Purple** -- Penance, Sacrifice and Preparation (Lent & Advent)  
**Red** --shedding of blood and fire of God's love (Feasts/Solemnities of Martyrs, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost, Confirmation)  
**White or Gold** -- rejoicing and purity (Easter, Easter season, Christmas, Christmas season, Feasts/Solemnities of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary and non-martyred saints)  
**Green** -- Hope and Life (Ordinary Time)  
**Rose** -- Joy (Gaudete Sunday-3rd Sunday of Advent and Laetare Sunday-4th Sunday of Lent)  
Black & White  
White, Purple, Gold, Red, Green

## **10. Bible**

2 Parts: Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) & New Testament (Christian Scriptures)

## **11. Rosary**

- a. Recognize the rosary and know that May and October are Mary's months
- b. Know that the Hail Mary, Our Father, Glory Be and Apostles' Creed are the mysteries and prayers of the Rosary

## **12. The Seven Sacraments**

1. Baptism
2. Reconciliation (Penance)
3. Holy Eucharist (Communion)
4. Confirmation
5. Holy Orders (e.g. Priest, Deacon, Bishop)
6. Matrimony (Marriage)
7. Anointing of the Sick.

# Q&A about Jesus, the Sacraments, and the Eucharist

## **Q: What is a Sacrament?**

A: A Sacrament is an outward sign, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church to give grace. Grace bears fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.

In the Bible: 2 Peter 1:4  
In the Catechism: CCC 1131

### *Going Deeper*

God gives you grace to help you do what is good and right. When you are open to God, he also gives you the grace to be kind, generous, courageous, and compassionate toward others. Grace bears good fruit in our lives. One of the most powerful ways God shares his grace with us is through the Sacraments. This grace helps us to become the-very-best-version-of-ourselves, grow in virtue, and live holy lives.

## **Q: How does Jesus share his life with us?**

A: During his earthly life, Jesus shared his life with others through his words and actions; now he shares the very same life with us through the Sacraments.

In the Bible: John 3:16; John 6:5–7  
In the Catechism: CCC 521; 1131, 1115–1116

### *Going Deeper*

God loves to share his life and love with us. We can experience his life through daily prayer, Scripture, and through serving one another. The most powerful way that God shares his life with us is through the Sacraments. Sunday Mass and regular Reconciliation are two Sacraments that guide us and encourage us on our journey to become the-best-version-of-ourselves, grow in virtue, and live holy lives.

## **Q: How many Sacraments are there?**

A: Seven.

In the Bible: John 20:22–23; Luke 22:14–20; John 7:37–39; James 5:14–16; Hebrews 5:1–6; Matthew 19:6  
In the Catechism: CCC 1113

## **Q: What are the Seven Sacraments; and which ones have you received?**

A: Baptism, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick. You have received Baptism, Penance, and Holy Eucharist.

In the Bible: John 20:22–23; Luke 22:14–20; John 7:37–39; James 5:14–16; Hebrews 5:1–6; Matthew 19:6  
In the Catechism: CCC 1113

## **105. Q: Where in the Church building is Jesus present in a special way?**

A: In the tabernacle.

In the Bible: Exodus 40:34; Luke 22:19  
In the Catechism: CCC 1379

**Q: Who is the source of all blessings?**

A: God is the source of all blessings. In the Mass we praise and adore God the Father as the source of every blessing in creation. We also thank God the Father for sending us his Son. Most of all we express our gratitude to God the Father for making us his children.

In the Bible: Luke 1:68-79; Psalm 72:18-19  
In the Catechism: CCC 1083, 1110

*Going Deeper*

You are blessed in so many ways. But every blessing comes from the very first blessing—life! God has given you life and made you his child. This is an incredible blessing! One of the greatest ways we can show God our gratitude is by going to Mass. By showing up every Sunday and participating in Mass, you show God how thankful you are for everything he has done for you.

**Q: True or False. When you receive Holy Communion, you receive a piece of bread that signifies, symbolizes, or represents Jesus.**

A: False.

In the Bible: Matthew 26:26  
In the Catechism: CCC 1374, 1413

**Q: What do you receive in Holy Communion?**

A: The Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ.

In the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:24 ; John 6: 54-55  
In the Catechism: CCC 1374, 1413

*Going Deeper*

Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. It is not a symbol; it is Jesus. We receive all of Jesus in the Eucharist. Even the tiniest crumb that falls from the wafer contains all of Jesus. The bread and wine become Jesus at the moment of Consecration. This is an incredible moment. In this moment Jesus comes among us once again. Every time you go to Mass, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. You are blessed to be able to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

**Q: What is Transubstantiation?**

A: Transubstantiation is when the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

In the Bible: Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19-20  
In the Catechism: CCC 1376

*Going Deeper*

God has the power to transform everyone and everything he comes in contact with. Everyday, in every Catholic Church, during every Mass, God transforms ordinary bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. After receiving Jesus in the Eucharist, many of the saints prayed that they would become what they had received. God answered their prayers and transformed their lives by helping them to live like Jesus. Just like with the saints, God can transform your life. Every time you receive Jesus in the Eucharist worthily, you can become a little more like him. Just like Jesus, you can love generously and serve powerfully everyone you meet.

**Q: When does the bread and wine change into the Body and Blood of Christ?**

A: It is changed by the words and intention of the priest at the moment of Consecration during Mass. The priest, asking for the help of the Holy Spirit, says the same words Jesus said at the Last Supper: “This is my body which will be given up for you... This is the cup of my blood...”

In the Bible: Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19–20  
In the Catechism: CCC 1412, 1413

### *Going Deeper*

The Last Supper is the most famous meal in the history of the world. In that room two thousand years ago, Jesus gave himself completely to his apostles. Every time we come to Mass, the priest recites the same words as Jesus during the Last Supper. When he does, the wheat bread and grape wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. Amazing! Jesus wants to give himself completely to you just as he gave himself completely to his apostles at the Last Supper. Jesus wants to be invited into your life. He wants to encourage you, guide you, listen to you, and love you. He offers himself to you in a special way at Mass, especially in the amazing gift of Holy Communion.

### **Q: What are the benefits of receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist?**

A: When you receive Jesus in the Eucharist you become more united with the Lord, your venial sins are forgiven, and you are given grace to avoid grave sins. Receiving Jesus in the Eucharist also increases your love for Jesus and reinforces the fact that you are a member of God’s family — the Catholic Church.

In the Bible: John 6:56–57  
In the Catechism: CCC 1391–1396

### *Going Deeper*

The Eucharist empowers us to do great things for God. The saints did incredible things for God throughout their lives and the Eucharist was the source of their strength. Through Holy Communion we grow closer to God, move further away from sinful habits, and grow in love for Jesus and the Catholic Church. The Eucharist is the ultimate food for your soul and it will give you the strength and courage to serve God and others powerfully just like the saints.

### **Q: How important is the Eucharist to the life of the Church?**

A: The Eucharist is indispensable in the life of the Church. The Eucharist is the heart of the Church. One of the reasons the Eucharist is so important to the life of the Church is because, through it, Jesus unites every member of the Church with his sacrifice on the cross. Every grace that flows from Jesus’ suffering, death, and Resurrection comes to us through the Church.

In the Bible: John 6:51, 54, 56  
In the Catechism: CCC 1324, 1331, 1368, 1407

### *Going Deeper*

Jesus promised to be with us always, no matter what. He has been keeping this promise for over 2,000 years. Jesus is always with us in the Eucharist. The Eucharist unites us to Jesus and his Church. It also unites us to one another. We are blessed to have the

Eucharist. Only through the Catholic Church can we receive the gift of the Eucharist. We are blessed to be Catholic.

**Q: Should you receive Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?**

A: No. If you do, you commit the additional mortal sin of sacrilege.

In the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:27–29  
In the Catechism: CCC 1385, 1415, 1457

*Going Deeper*

If Jesus came to visit your home and it was so messy you couldn't open the door to let Jesus in, that would be terrible. No matter how much Jesus wants to be a part of our lives he will never force himself upon us. Mortal sin slams the door of our souls in Jesus' face. It breaks our relationship with God and prevents the wonderful graces of the Eucharist from flowing into our hearts, minds, and souls. Reconciliation reopens the door to our souls and let's Jesus enter our lives again.

**Q: If you are in a state of mortal sin, what should you do before receiving Holy Communion?**

A: You should go to Confession as soon as possible.

In the Bible: 2 Corinthians 5:20  
In the Catechism: CCC 1385, 1457

**Q: Who offered the first Mass?**

A: Jesus Christ.

In the Bible: Mark 14:22–24  
In the Catechism: CCC 1323

**Q: When did Jesus offer the first Mass?**

A: On Holy Thursday night, the night before He died, at the Last Supper.

In the Bible: Matthew 26:26–28  
In the Catechism: CCC 1323

**Q: Who offers the Eucharistic sacrifice?**

A: Jesus is the eternal high priest. In the Mass, he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice through the ministry of the priest.

In the Bible: Mark 14:22; Matthew 26:26; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24  
In the Catechism: CCC 1348

*Going Deeper*

The Last Supper was the first Eucharistic celebration. This was the apostles First Communion, and the first time anybody had ever received the Eucharist. The Mass is not just a symbol of what happened that night. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. Every time we receive Holy Communion Jesus gives himself to us in the same way he gave himself to his apostles over 2,000 years ago. Jesus works through the priest at Mass to transform the bread and wine into his Body and Blood.

**Q: What is the Sacrifice of the Mass?**

A: It is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary, the memorial of Christ's Passover, made present when the priest repeats the words of Consecration spoken by Jesus over the bread and wine at the Last Supper.

In the Bible: Hebrews 7:25–27  
In the Catechism: CCC 1364, 1413

### *Going Deeper*

God loves you so much and he will go to unimaginable lengths to prove his love for you. On Good Friday Jesus was beaten, bullied, mocked, spat upon, cursed at, and crucified on the cross. Jesus laid down his life for us. On Easter Sunday Jesus rose from the dead. He did this so that we might live a very different life while here on earth and happily with him forever in heaven. Every time we go to Mass we remember the life of Jesus, the path he invites us to walk, and the incredible lengths he went to show us his love.

#### **Q: Who can preside at the Eucharist?**

A: Only an ordained priest can preside at the Eucharist and Consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

In the Bible: John 13:3–8  
In the Catechism: CCC 1411

### *Going Deeper*

To be a priest is a great honor and privilege. Priests lay down their lives to serve God and his people. The priesthood is a life of service. One of the ultimate privileges of the priesthood is standing in Jesus' place and transforming bread and wine into the Eucharist. This privilege is reserved for priests alone. Nobody other than a priest can do this.

#### **Q: How do we participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass?**

A: By uniting ourselves and our intentions to the bread and wine, offered by the priest, which become Jesus' sacrifice to the Father.

In the Bible: Romans 12:1  
In the Catechism: CCC 1407

#### **Q: What does the Eucharistic celebration we participate in at Mass always include?**

A: The Eucharist celebration always includes: the proclamation of the Word of God; thanksgiving to God the Father for all his blessings; the Consecration of the bread and wine; and participation in the liturgical banquet by receiving the Lord's Body and Blood. These elements constitute one single act of worship.

In the Bible: Luke 24:13–35  
In the Catechism: CCC 1345–1355, 1408

### *Going Deeper*

The Mass follows a certain formula that is always repeated and never changes. You could go to Mass anywhere in the world and you will always find it is the same. At every Mass we read from the Bible, show God our gratitude for the blessing of Jesus, witness bread and wine transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus, and receive Jesus during Holy Communion. In the midst of this great routine, God wants to surprise you. You could spend a lifetime going to Mass every single day and at the end of your life still be surprised by what God has to say to you in the Mass. The Mass is truly amazing!