

“I am the bread of life.”
– John 6:35



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The Danger of Casual Communion

Approaching the Eucharist in a Worthy Manner



Introduction

- "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me." (John 6:53-57)

The Danger of Unworthy Reception

- “Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner **will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**” (1 Corinthians 11:27)
- *“Someone who profanes the supper is like a priest who pours the blood out, making the death appear to be a slaughter and not a sacrifice. It is like those who pierced Jesus on the cross. They did not do it in order to drink his blood but in order to shed it. The person who comes to the supper unworthily does much the same thing and gains nothing by it.” (St. John Chrysostom)*
- “For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.” (1 Corinthians 11:30-31)

Homily of St. John Chrysostom

- “I want to remind you with what I repeatedly reiterated to you concerning our communion with the Holy Mysteries which is of Christ. I see you in a state of extreme looseness, permissiveness, and an alarming audacity and lamentable recklessness. I weep over my condition and ask myself; Do these people really know for whom do they stand? Or do these people realize the power of this Mystery? At this thought I become angry reluctantly. If I could go away, I would have left your community out of distraughtness. If I scold one of you, he disregards my words and resents the reprimand as if I were unfair to him. I am amazed that you do not get angry at those who violate you and plunder your possessions as much as you are angry at me; I who am keen over your salvation. I dread the thought that God's wrath may be inflicted upon you because of your disregard of this great Mystery. Do you really know who is He you want to partake of? This is the Holy Body of God the Word, and His blood that He offered for our salvation. Anyone who partakes in it undeservingly will suffer abominable punishment; as was the case with Judas who betrayed God when he had communion with Him without being worthy.”

How to Partake Worthily

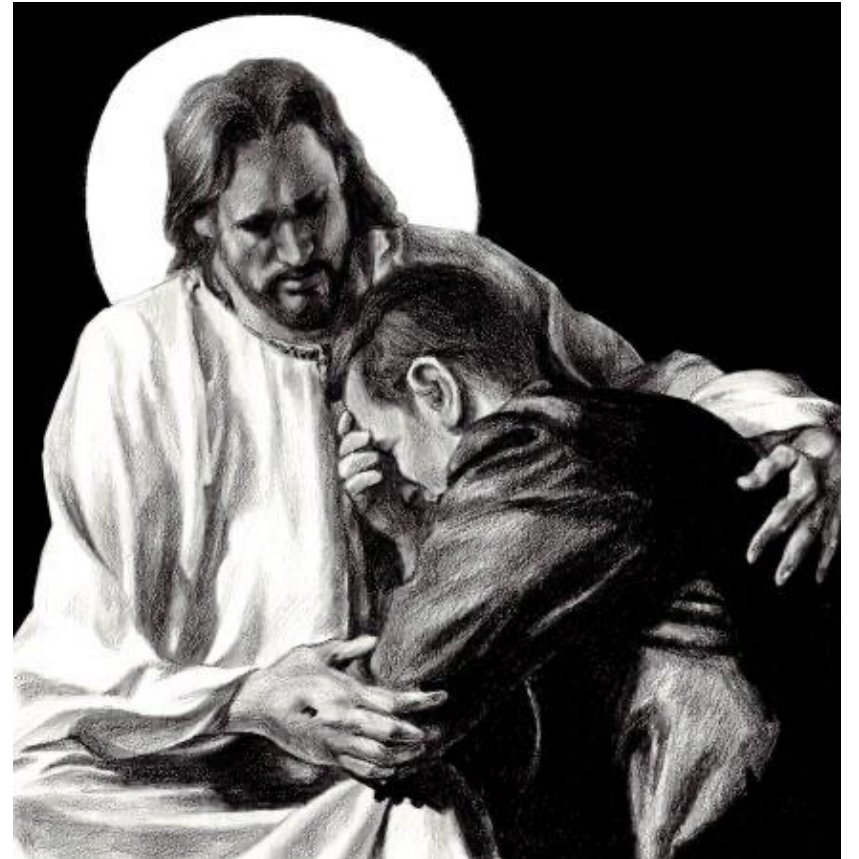
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1. Peace and Reconciliation (Unity)

- “For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10:17)
- *“Make us all worthy, O our Master, to partake of Your Holies, unto the purification of our souls, bodies, and spirits, that we may become one body and one spirit...”* (Liturgy of St. Basil)
- “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matt. 5:23-24)

Repentance and Struggle Against Sin

- “Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man **examine himself**, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.” (1 Cor. 11:27-28)



Preparation through Participation

- “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.” (Jn. 15:3)
- “We ask and entreat Your goodness, O Lover of Mankind, that – since You have purified us all – You join us to Yourself through our partaking of Your divine Mysteries...” (Liturgy of St. Basil)
- “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me...” (Matt. 15:8-9)