

### **The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is...**

... the source and summit of the Christian life because in it Christ associates his Church and all its members with His sacrifice offered once for all on the cross to His Father. The celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward our intimate union with Christ through Holy Communion. To receive Holy Communion is to receive Christ Himself.

The essential signs of the sacrament of the Eucharist are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper: *“This is my body which will be given up for you... This is the cup of my blood...”*

That is why under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself is present in a **true, real, and substantial** manner.

### **The fruits of Holy Communion:**

- The Eucharist is an intimate union with Christ Jesus.
- What material food produces in our bodily life, Holy Communion achieves in our spiritual life.
- Holy Communion separates us from sin.
- It makes and unites the Church.
- It commits us to the poor and sacrificial aspect of life.

### **A few things to remember about this sacrament:**

1. All Christians are to hold the Most Holy Eucharist in highest honor, taking an active part in the celebration of the sacrifice, receiving this sacrament most devoutly and frequently, and worshipping it with the highest adoration.
2. Anyone aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion without first having received absolution in the sacrament of penance. If the person committed venial sins only, expressing contrition for sins is sufficient to be able to receive Holy Communion.
3. Only a validly ordained priest / bishop is able to confect – in the person of Christ – the sacrament of the Eucharist.
4. A person who has already received Holy Communion can receive it a second time on the same day only during the Mass that he/she participates in.
5. A person who is to receive the Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from any food and drink, except for only water and medicine. The elderly, the infirm and those who care for them can receive this sacrament even if they have eaten something within the preceding hour.
6. After their First Communion, Catholics are obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, during the Easter season.

### **F.A.Q.**

May I receive Holy Communion in a non-Catholic church?

A Catholic may receive Communion in a non-Catholic church only if (1) he/she cannot receive it in a Catholic church and (2) only if that church has a valid Eucharist, like the Eastern Orthodox churches. In Protestant churches, Catholics are not to receive Communion. Also non-Catholics are not to receive Holy Communion in a Catholic church.