

A Form for Spiritual Communion

For the Fourth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2020

This Form for Spiritual Communion is adapted from the one used by Oblates and Associates of the Order of Julian of Norwich. To find out more, contact the Order: W704 Alft Road, White Lake, WI 54491-9715; (715) 882-2377; www.orderofjulian.org

There are occasions when one is unable — because of some unavoidable exigency — to participate in the Holy Eucharist and/or to receive Holy Communion. Especially this may be true when there is no Eucharist offered locally on our Oblates' Days of Obligation. Further, one may wish to receive Holy Communion daily where no daily Eucharist is available. In all such situations, it is appropriate to make a "Spiritual Communion".

St Thomas Aquinas once defined Spiritual Communion as "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament and in lovingly embracing him as if we had actually received him."

St Teresa of Avila wrote: "When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you."

St Catherine of Siena was afraid that a Spiritual Communion was nothing compared to a Sacramental Communion. In a vision of our Lord she saw him hold up two chalices and say, "In this golden chalice I put your Sacramental Communion. In this silver chalice I put your Spiritual Communion. Both chalices are pleasing to me."

St Jean Vianney, the Curé d'Ars, wrote: "A spiritual communion acts on the soul as blowing does on a cinder-covered fire which was about to go out. Whenever you feel your love of God growing cold, quickly make a spiritual communion."

The Rite

Compose oneself in silence and devout openness to God. If you like, you can pray Julian's own prayer

*God, of your goodness, give me yourself;
for you are enough to me,
and I can ask nothing that is less that can be full honor to you.
And if I ask anything that is less,
ever shall I be in want,
for only in you have I all. Amen.*

V. Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

R. The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord, God, Lamb of God
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
(+) in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Collect of the Day - 4th Sunday of Easter

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people: Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Readings

The First Reading - Acts 2:42-47

Those who had been baptized devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Second Reading - 1 Peter 2:19-25

It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Gospel - John 10:1-10

Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made
of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate
from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I look for the resurrection of the dead,
(+) and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Preparation for a Spiritual Communion

Psalm 63

- 1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
- 2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place*
that I might behold your power and your glory.
- 3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
my lips shall give you praise.
- 4 So will I bless you as long as I live * and lift up my hands in your Name.
- 5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips.
- 6 When I remember you upon my bed, *
and meditate on you in the night watches.
- 7 For you have been my helper, *
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.
- 8 My soul clings to you; *
your right hand holds me fast.
- 9 May those who seek after my life to destroy it *
go down into the depths of the earth.
- 10 Let them fall upon the edge of the sword, *
and let them be food for jackals.
- 11 But the king will rejoice in God; all those who swear by him will be glad; *
for the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

The Communion Prayer

In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. I present to you my soul and body with the earnest wish that I may always be united to you, and, since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself with you, and embrace you with all the love of my soul. Let nothing ever separate you from me. May I live in you, and may you live in me, both in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

A General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
I, your unworthy servant, give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to me and to all whom you have made.
I bless you for my creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, I pray, give me such an awareness of your mercies,
that with a truly thankful heart I may show forth your praise,
not only with my lips, but in my life,
by giving up my self to your service, and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all my days;
through Jesus Christ my Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.