

Communion

- ❖ The first Holy Communion was the Last Supper with Jesus and His Apostles. Each time we receive Holy Communion; we receive Christ's Holy Body and Blood. Jesus gave Holy Communion to us so that we may always remember that He suffered and died to save us from our sins.
- ❖ To receive Christ and to have Him live in us is a great privilege. Therefore, we need to prepare ourselves spiritually and physically through Fasting and Holy Confession. Please review the reasons why we fast and the guide to fasting at www.st-demetrios.org/participating.htm
- ❖ We should go to Confession during the fasting periods leading up to the great feasts of Pascha, The Nativity of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ, and the Falling Asleep of the Theotokos on August 15th and before your Saint's Feast Day. Holy Confession is also necessary if we have committed a serious sin, if a particular sin has become too much of a bad habit or if we have become lazy in our Christian life by not praying regularly at home and not attending the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Children over 7 are expected to go to Confession.
- ❖ Confession requires a prayerful examination of our feelings, thoughts, words, acts, attitudes, habits, values, priorities, goals, direction and way of life. This self-examination includes not only our personal religious life, but also our relationship with parents and families, our social activities, work or school conduct, even our hobbies and extra-curricular pursuits. That is because our entire existence, not just our life in the Church, should be lived in Christ. The goal of this sincere search of conscience under the light of the Holy Spirit is not to condemn ourselves, but to know our true selves in Christ who has given us access to God's mercy and forgiveness, and who has taught us to live for God's glory. Please review our Confession Guide at www.st-demetrios.org/participating.htm.
- ❖ The night before receiving Holy Communion, you should read the Communion prayers (www.st-demetrios.org/participating.htm) and go to bed early, avoiding parties, television and other forms of entertainment. The day of Holy Communion, nothing can be eaten or drunk after the previous midnight. You can, though, brush your teeth before Holy Communion, being careful not to swallow. Children can also follow this fast.
- ❖ Before you leave home, ask your family to forgive you for any wrong doings and make sure you are physically and mentally prepared. Arrive at church on time.
- ❖ When the time in the Divine Liturgy comes for Communion, our spiritual fathers ask that you proceed to the altar from the side aisles. Approach with great respect, your hands at your side, crossed over your chest or one hand over the other in front of you, but never in your pockets or behind your back. Make the sign of the Cross. Hold the red cloth directly under your chin. Say your Baptismal name. Open your mouth wide to receive Holy Communion. Wipe your lips with the red cloth and hand it to the person behind you. Make the sign of the Cross. Please allow Sunday School children to receive Holy Communion first so that they may proceed to school and have ample time to learn about God.
- ❖ The following are important reminders regarding who can receive Holy Communion: 1) All those receiving Communion must be baptized Orthodox Christians; 2) If married, your marriage MUST have been blessed in the Orthodox Church; 3) If you are civilly divorced, you MUST have been granted an Ecclesiastical Divorce; and 4) Those that are co-habiting with another (boyfriend/girlfriend) should not receive.