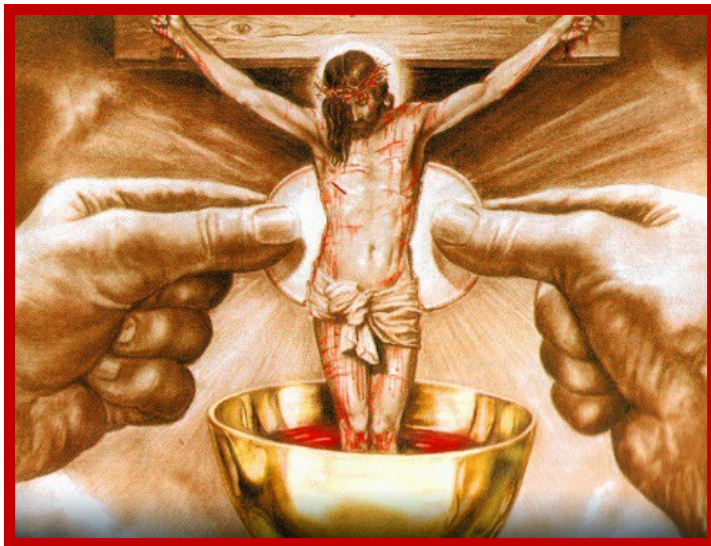


**Looking for Answers –
Explore What The Catholic Church Really Teaches –
Part 12**



Question:

Why do Catholics believe their Holy Communion is the actual Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ? Why don't they believe as Protestants do that Christ is only present symbolically, or spiritually, in the consecrated bread and wine?



Answer:

Catholics believe that their Holy Communion, the Blessed Eucharist, is the actual Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ, because that is what Christ said IT was: *This is My Body...This is My Blood.* (St. Matthew 26:26 – 28; see also St. Luke 22:19 – 20 and say Mark 14:22 – 24); because that is what Christ said they must receive in order to have eternal life:... *Except you eat*

the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you... (St. John 6:48 – 52; 54 – 56); and because that is what the Apostles believed: *The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?* (1 Corinthians 10:16). *Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord.* (1 Corinthians 11:27 – 29). Also, Catholics believe that Holy Communion is the actual Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ because that is what ALL Christians believed until the advent of Protestantism in the 16th century.

St. Justin the Martyr, the illustrious Church Father of the second century, wrote: *This food is known among us as the Eucharist... We do not receive these things as common bread and common drink; but as Jesus Christ our Savior, being made flesh by the Word of God.*

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, venerable Church Father of the fourth century, wrote: *Since then Christ has declared and said of the bread, 'This is My Body,' who after that will venture to doubt? And seeing that He has affirmed and said, 'This is My Blood,' who will raise a question and say it is not His Blood?* In addition to the witness of

Sacred Scripture and Christian tradition, Catholics have the witness of the Holy Eucharist itself: On numerous occasions great and awesome miracles have attended its display, and seldom has its reception by the Catholic faithful failed to produce in them a feeling of joyful union with their Lord and Redeemer. In the face of all this evidence, Catholics could hardly be expected to adopt the Protestant position.

Question:



Why are Catholic lay people usually given Holy Communion only under the one form of bread? By not giving the consecrated BREAD AND WINE, isn't the Catholic Church depriving its people of the full benefit of Holy Communion?

Answer:

In the Catholic Church the congregation is usually given Holy Communion only under the one form of bread because, if the consecrated *Bread* is accidentally dropped on the floor in the serving, it can be wholly retrieved – particles of the Body of Christ would not be left on the floor to be desecrated. If Holy Communion were given under both forms, and if the consecrated *Wine* were accidentally spilled on the floor in the serving, it would be a virtual impossibility to retrieve all of the precious Substance – some part of the Blood of Christ would inevitably be desecrated. By not giving the congregation Holy Communion under both forms, the Catholic Church is not cheating anyone, because in receiving EITHER the

consecrated *Bread* OR the consecrated *Wine*, the communicant receives the complete Body of Christ, including His Flesh AND His Blood, His Soul AND His Divinity. (Ed. Note: Observed in the Traditional Latin Mass even until the present time. It is always received on the tongue and not on the hands to be consumed. Changes made in the Second Vatican Council allows someone to receive under both species and can be received either on the tongue or on the hands.)

The consecrated *Bread* by itself imparts a true Holy Communion with Christ, a full measure of sanctifying grace, even as Christ said: *The BREAD that I will give, is my FLESH, for the life of the world... He that eateth this BREAD, shall live forever.* (St. John 6:52, 59). And the Apostle Paul: *Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, OR drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord.* (1 Corinthians 11:27). After the Consecration the priest receives Holy Communion under both forms, and this suffices to complete the Holy Communion part of the Mass service.

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