

Life in Communion with God

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*"He who eats My Flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in Him"
(Jn 6: 56).*

St. John Chrysostom said, "How many of you say, 'I wish to see the appearance, looks and clothes of the Lord.' Here, you see, touch and eat Him, then you desire to see His clothes although He gave you Himself, not only to see, but to also touch, eat and take inside of you." Meditate on this great honour, the food that God offers you to enjoy.

By partaking of the Body and Blood of our Lord we abide in Him and Him in us (Jn 6:56). Also in Jn. 15:4 Jesus says, "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me." In summary, the life of communion with God gives us the fruit to continue to the eternal life. These fruits can be from doing good deeds (Jam 2: 14 - 26) to the strength or the armor to fight the wiles of the devil. Those who do not abide in God become withered and are not able to produce the fruit to inherit the eternal life. (Jn. 15:6)

Many of us who do partake of Holy Communion wonder 'why don't I feel the benefits of Holy Communion'? The late Bishop Yoannis says, " The answer is very clear. It is because we do not prepare ourselves well enough to receive this great sacrament. We do not spend the time or the effort in preparation." Below are points to assist us in feeling the blessings of Holy Communion in our life;

1. Stir your emotions and prepare yourself.
2. Meditate on God's great love
3. Meditate on God's great humility
4. During the Holy Liturgy stand in a quiet place
5. Present yourself for Holy Communion in awe and reverence of this great mystery
6. After Holy Communion try to spend some quiet time reflecting on this great sacrament that you have partaken of.

The regular partaking of the Eucharistic life is very important in our spiritual life. It is through the power of the Body and Blood of our Saviour that we receive the purification of our souls, bodies and spirit. In the early church, "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42) A number of people abstain from presenting themselves for Holy Communion because they feel they are not worthy for what ever reason. If we do not proceed for communion and

wait till we become righteous, this means we want to become righteous by our own efforts. On the contrary, we should proceed in our weakness so it is through the power of the sacrament that we become righteous.

The right preparation for Holy Communion is true repentance from the heart and our determination to submit our life to God. To be worthy to partake of the communion means to proceed in awe, fear and appreciation of the great sacrament. St. Paul said, " For he that eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor 11:29) He also said, "let a man examine himself..." (1 Cor 11:28).