**The Eucharist**

Ask: **What are the seven Sacraments?**

**What is the Sacrament of the Eucharist?**

The Sacrament of Communion is a Holy Sacrament by which the believer eats the Holy Body and the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, presented by the Bread and Wine. This Sacrament has a special significance among the Seven Church sacraments. It is sometimes called the ‘Mystery of Mysteries’ or the ‘Crown of Sacraments’; for all the Sacraments are crowned by the Eucharist.

The Lord Jesus instituted the holy Eucharist on Covenant Thursday. After He celebrated the Rite of Passover of the Jews, He rose and washed the feet of His disciples, as a sign of repentance and preparation, then sat down and instituted the Passover of the New Covenant, which is the Sacrament of Holy Communion. “He took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat, this is My Body’, then He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to His disciples saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you, for this is My Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins’” (Matthew 26:26-28)

The Liturgical Eucharistic text is taken from the Holy Bible (1 Corinthians 2:9).

|  |
| --- |
| The person baptized must receive Communion directly after Baptism. |
| The repentant person must receive Communion after having confessed. |
| The person who marries must receive Communion after the wedding, (which must take place between the Matins and Holy Mass), according to the original Rite of Matrimony.  Also, whoever is ordained with any priestly rank must receive Communion following the Holy Mass of his ordination. |

**Symbols of the Eucharist in the Old Testament (Students create posters about this information)**

* The offering of Melchizedek (bread & wine) was a symbol of this Holy Sacrament, “Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High” (Gen 14:18). This is the first verse in Holy Scripture where the word “priest” was used and it is interesting to notice the connection between the priesthood of Melchizedek and the offering of bread and wine. Therefore, it was said about our Lord, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6)
* The Passover lamb that the children of Israel offered on the night of their exodus from Egypt, and which they used to offer every year thereafter was a symbol of this Sacrament “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor 5:7)
* The manna that the children of Israel ate in the wilderness of Sinai for forty years was a symbol of the Sacrament of Eucharist. Our Lord said, “This is the bread which came down from heaven – not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever” (Jn 6:58) – “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever and the bread that I shall give is My flesh” (Jn 6:51)

**The Division of the Eucharist Liturgy**

The Eucharist Liturgy is a journey to heaven - during which we enjoy the company of our Lord Jesus through our unity with Him by:

* **The Hymn**: This is a preparation for this journey and through it we enter the life of praising God the Creator.
* **The bread and wine Prayer (the Lamb**): this is the beginning of the journey and in it we offer all our life to Christ.
* **Readings:** These are the guides of the journey. Without them we cannot follow the road or achieve the goal. They give the believers a chance to listen to the voice of God.

Sum up:

Why is partaking in the **Eucharist** important?

* Abiding in Lord Jesus Christ: “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him” (Jn 6:56). Consequently we bear the fruits of the spirit, “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5)
* Obtaining Eternal Life: “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day… He who eats this bread will live forever” (Jn 6:54,58)
* Growth & Maintenance of Our Spiritual Life: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you… For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed… he who feeds on Me will live because of Me” (Jn 6:53,55,57)
* Salvation & Remission of Sins: “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Mt 26:28)
* Unification of Believers: “For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread” (1 Cor 10:17)

**Consequences of Unworthy Communion**

St. Paul said, “Whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning (recognizing clearly) the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep (die). For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.” (1 Cor 11:27-31)

How can we be worthy?

* *Orthodox Faith*:
* *Repentance & Confession*:
* *Reconciliation With Others*:
* *True Worthiness is Feeling Unworthy*:
* *Obeying The Church Rules*: