

What Are We Doing and Why?

The Communion Rite: Receive What You ALL Are

When we share in communion at Mass we commune with Christ present in the sacrament, and with all the other members of his Body both present at that Mass and elsewhere. In one of his teachings Pope John Paul II emphasized that it is important *to be ever mindful that communion with Christ is deeply tied to communion with our brothers and sisters. The Sunday Eucharistic gathering, far from being simply a personal or private religious experience, should clearly demonstrate that it is an experience of communion with all our brothers and sisters in Christ.* Receiving communion brings us into an intimate union with Christ, but that intimacy can never ignore or exclude those around us, near and far. When we share the Body and Blood of the Lord we are united not only with the *head* of the Body of Christ, but also with *every member* of that Body. That is the very meaning and purpose of the Eucharist and why we call it communion. This recognition of and reverence for the Body of Christ, both in the Eucharist and in one another, is to be carried with us beyond the Sunday gathering into every moment, circumstance, situation, and relationship throughout our whole week. In his letter to the Colossians St. Paul says *in Christ were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible; all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.* So, though we have a special relationship in Christ with those who gather at Mass on Sunday, we are also united in Christ with all other men and women, boys and girls, no matter what their race, religion, or nationality. By virtue of this, when we accept sacramental communion with Christ, we are also accepting and committing to communion with *all* who have been *created through him and for him*, not just a select few who are like us or who like us.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at tkautza@saintmaryhc.org.