

Spiritual Communion

Spiritual Communion is little known within the Church of England but provision has been made since the 1549 Prayer Book for people who are so incapacitated as to be unable to receive the elements, to eat and drink spiritually. St Thomas Aquinas defined Spiritual Communion as 'an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and a loving embrace as though we had already received Him'. That is, by our desire for Christ in the Sacrament, we are able to partake of the fruits and advantages of the Blessed Sacrament itself.

The Church safeguards this privilege of Spiritual Communion by requiring the communicant to consider:--

1. The need for repentance, as in the case of Sacramental Communion.
2. The need of a real faith that Christ died to save humanity, and that certain benefits are received by the soul as the result.

In recollection of these benefits and in thanksgiving for them the communicant will receive the Body and Blood of Christ, to their soul's good as surely as if they were partaking of the consecrated elements in the service of the Church.

Here follows the Order of Service for Spiritual Communion, to be undertaken at home when it cannot be received in church.

If on any Sunday or other Day of Obligation you are prevented from making your Communion you may join in the prayers of the Universal Church by using the following form by yourself or with your family.

Say: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
The Lord is here. The Spirit is with us.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*You may want to read the Collect for the day, the Epistle, and the Holy Gospel.
You may find these readings for every day of the year at <http://almanac.oremus.org/>*

Or use the following:

First Reading – Revelation 3:20

Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Psalm 62

On God alone my soul in stillness waits; from him comes my salvation.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold,
so that I shall never be shaken.

Gospel – John 15:5

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Spend a few moments praying for the people you know and love, your community and the needs of the world.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, I have sinned against you and against my neighbour, in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through my own deliberate fault. I am truly sorry and repent of all my sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive me all that is past; and grant that I may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

Then say:

Almighty and merciful God, pardon and deliver me from all my sins. Amen.

Read the Comfortable Words.

Hear the words of comfort our Saviour Christ says to all who truly turn to him:
Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Hear what Saint Paul says:

This saying is true and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15

Hear what Saint John says:

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 2: 1,2

Then say:

In union, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being offered this day, and remembering the community of my own parish, I long to give you praise and thanksgiving for creation and all the blessings of this life, for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection, for the means of grace and the hope of glory. I present to you my body and soul as a living sacrifice, with the earnest wish that I may always be united with you. And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I pray that you will come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to you, and embrace you with all the strength of my soul and the life you have given me. Let nothing ever separate me from you. May I live and die in your love. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.