

Spiritual Communion

God has made us for communion—not only with others, but especially with Him. After our choice to divorce ourselves from God, He, nevertheless, continues to pursue us and bring us back to Himself. The beginning of the prayer of absolution during the sacrament of penance sums it up beautifully: “God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins.”



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Every sacrament, in fact, works this same reconciliation and communion. The most efficacious is the worthy reception of the Blessed Sacrament which, as St. Augustine said, actually turns *us* into *Christ*! “I am the food of grown men,” St. Augustine hears Jesus saying. “Grow, and you shall feed upon me; nor shall you change me, like the food of your flesh, into yourself, but you shall be changed into me.” This is true eucharistic Communion!

But what happens when we cannot receive Jesus sacramentally? The tradition tells us to make a “spiritual communion,” joining our whole selves—prayers, works, joys, and sufferings—to his sacrificial presence in the Eucharist—even when that sacrament is not before us to receive.

In his last encyclical as pope, St. John Paul II explained that the practice of spiritual communion has “happily been established in the Church for centuries and recommended by saints, who were masters of the spiritual life. Saint Teresa of Jesus wrote: ‘When you do not receive Communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you.’” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 34)

Prayer of Spiritual Communion

(traditionally attributed to St. Alphonsus Liguori)

“My Jesus, I believe that you are present
in the Blessed Sacrament.

I love you above all things and I desire you
with all my heart.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,

I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already in my heart
and unite myself to you completely.

Please do not let me ever be separated from you.”

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: St. Josemaria Escriva encouraged everyone to make a spiritual communion as often as they could, “What a source of grace there is in spiritual communion! Practice it frequently and you’ll have greater presence of God and closer union with Him in all your actions.” What a blessing and consolation for us all in these difficult days.

