

# **IS CATHOLIC EUCHARIST NECESSARY FOR SALVATION? DOES THE WINE AND BREAD LITERALLY TRANSFORM TO THE BLOOD AND FLESH OF JESUS?**

*The Catholic Blog - Helping people find answers to the most common questions about Catholicism with answers from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bible.*

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## **“Is Catholic Eucharist Necessary for Salvation?” - Important Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:**

- “Our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again” (CCC 1323)
- “The Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the Christian life.’” (CCC 1324)
- “The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it.” (CCC 1324)
- “in the Blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.” (CCC 1324) [NOTE: ‘Pasch’ means Passover or Easter]
- “The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being.” (CCC 1325)
- “Holy Sacrifice because it makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Savior and includes the Church’s offering.” (CCC 1330)
- “**Holy Communion because by this sacrifice we unite ourselves to Christ.**” (CCC 1331)
- “**Holy Mass (Missa) because the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished concludes with the sending forth (missio) of the faithful.**” (CCC 1332)
- “**At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ’s Body and Blood.**” (CCC 1333)
- “The bread and wine are brought to the altar; they will be offered by the priest in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they will become his body and blood” (CCC 1350)
- “The Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator” (CCC 1350)
- “no one may take part in it unless he believes that what we teach is true, has received baptism for the forgiveness of sins and new birth, and lives in keeping with what Christ taught.” (CCC 1355)
- “**bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made present.**” (CCC 1357)
- “It is by conversion of the bread and wine into Christ’s body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament” (CCC 1375)
- “the making present and the sacramental offering of his unique sacrifice” (CCC 1362)
- “Because it is the memorial of Christ’s Passover, the Eucharist is also a sacrifice... in the Eucharist Christ gives us the very body which he gave up for us on the cross, **the very blood which he ‘poured out for man for the forgiveness of sins.’**” (CCC 1365)
- “The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it *re-presents* (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it *applies* its fruit” (CCC 1366)
- “**its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of sins we daily commit**” (CCC 1366)

- “Christ’s sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering” (CCC 1368)’
- “The Church continues to reproduce this sacrifice” (CCC 1372)
- “the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained” (CCC 1374)
- “it has always been the conviction of the Church of God...that **by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation**” (CCC 1376)

### **“Is Catholic Eucharist Necessary for Salvation?” - Important Scriptures to Consider:**

- John 6:35 “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.’” (ESV)
- John 6:40 “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who **looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day.” (ESV)
- John 6:47–51 “Truly, truly, I say to you, **whoever believes has eternal life.** [48] I am the bread of life. [49] Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. [50] This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. [51] I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” (ESV)
- John 6:56 “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.” (ESV)
- John 6:68–69 “Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, [69] and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” (ESV)
- John 15:4 “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” (ESV)
- 1 John 4:13 “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.” (ESV)
- 1 Corinthians 11:25–29 “In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. **Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.**” [26] For as often as you **eat this bread and drink the cup**, you **proclaim the Lord's death** until he comes. [27] Whoever, therefore, **eats the bread or drinks the cup** of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be **guilty concerning the body and blood** of the Lord. [28] Let a person examine himself, then, and so **eat of the bread and drink of the cup.** [29] For anyone who eats and drinks without **discerning the body** eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (ESV)
- John 19:30 “When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (ESV)
- Matthew 28:20 “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (ESV)
- 2 Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” (ESV)

## **“Is Catholic Eucharist Necessary for Salvation?” - Important Questions to Consider:**

- Why does Jesus compare the manna in the desert with himself as “the bread of life” in John 6:35? What does He mean by never hunger and never thirst? Does He mean the Eucharist elements will satisfy a literal hunger and thirst? Or is He describing spiritual salvation, peace, and life through belief and trust in Jesus as the Son of God?
  - **What does Jesus describe in John 6:40 & John 6:47 as bringing eternal life?**
  - Why does someone literally eat and drink something? What is the purpose of food and drink? Why is trust important in the process of eating? What does the eater believe about the food?
  - Does John 6:56 mean Jesus’ literal flesh and blood? Why does He reference the word “abide”?
  - What does John 15:4 mean by “abide”? What does that look like in a plant? What does that look like in the Christian life?
  - Why does Peter tie Jesus’ words to “eternal life” in John 6:68-69?
  - What does it mean to be “in Christ”? What unites us to Christ? When are we united to Christ?
  - What does it mean for Christ to be “in us”? When does that happen?
  - **What does 1 John 4:13 say is the evidence of union with Christ?** How does this counter the Catholic concept that union with God can only happen through the Eucharist (CCC 1331)?
    - Here are some more helpful Bible passages on our union with Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17, 12:2, 13:5; John 15:4, 5, 7; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Galatians 2:20, 3:28; Ephesians 1:4, 2:10, 3:17; Philippians 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 John 4:13; Colossians 1:27; Romans 8:10
  - When tasting the Eucharist, does the texture or taste change with the substance? If the wine and the bread is literally transforming into the blood and flesh of Christ, then why does the texture and taste remain as wine and bread?
  - Why is the Eucharist limited to the Catholic Church alone for those in good standing? Is that what the Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34?
  - Does 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 describe the elements actually transforming in substance? Does it describe Jesus actually being present with them during that remembrance?
  - Does it describe the Church bringing judgment or the Lord bringing judgment? Does it describe individual discernment and accountability or the Church exercising oversight on who is allowed to take communion?
  - **Why does 1 Corinthians 11:25–29 say eat and drink the “bread and cup” but then switch to “guilty concerning the body and blood” and then back to “bread and cup” again?**
  - Is it more about “proclamation” and “remembrance” (1 Cor 11) as the purpose or an “efficacious” and “present..sacramental offering” (CCC)? Why the stark contrast in terms?
  - Does the Bible say Jesus’ sacrifice needs to be reproduced repeatedly? What did Jesus mean on the cross when He said “it is finished” (John 19:30)?
  - What does Jesus mean when He says “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20) and that “Jesus Christ is in you” (2 Cor 13:5)? Is that only when the Eucharist is offered? Or is He always present with believers through His Spirit?
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