

## **DID YOU KNOW?** There are prescribed limits within the Roman Catholic Church regarding how many times one can receive Holy Communion each day?

The Roman Rite of the Catholic Church follows a series of norms established in the Code of Canon Law (CCC), supplemented by other instructions or directives, if/as needed. The Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church possesses a similar, separate Code of Canons of Oriental Churches.

In particular, CCC #905 stipulates, “§1. *A priest is not permitted to celebrate the Eucharist more than once a day, except in cases where the law permits him to celebrate or concelebrate more than once on the same day.* §2. *If there is a shortage of priests, the local ordinary [bishop] can allow priests to celebrate twice a day for a just cause, or if pastoral necessity requires it, even three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation.*”

CCC #917 stipulates, “*A person who has received the Most Holy Eucharist may receive it again on the same day only during the celebration of the Eucharist in which the person participates, with due regard for the prescription of Canon 921, §2.*” Canon 921, §2 stipulates, “*Even if they have received Communion in the same day, those who are in danger of death are strongly urged to receive again.*” NB: Within the Diocese of Colorado Springs, this restriction regarding reception of Holy Communion only twice per day also applies to Deacons per Bishop Sheridan.

Several other basic stipulations govern the reception of Holy Communion:

- First, the person must be a baptized Catholic and must *not be under an ecclesiastical censure* (e.g., ex-communication, etc.) prohibiting reception of sacraments (CCC #915).
- Second, a person *who is conscious of grave (mortal) sin* must first make a sacramental confession and receive absolution. If no legitimate opportunity exists for first going to confession, then a person may make an act of perfect contrition with the pledge to the Lord to go to Penance, as soon as possible, before receiving Holy Communion (CCC #916). {Example: A confession is unavailable before a Mass; one participates in the Mass and receives Holy Communion, and participates in confession right after the Mass.}
- Third, *a person must fast from food and drink* (except water or medicine) for one hour beforehand (CCC #919). However, the period of fast before receiving Holy Communion is reduced to “approximately one quarter of an hour” for those who are sick at home or at a hospital, those elderly confined to home or a nursing home, and those who care for these people and who are unable conveniently to observe the fast (Immensae Caritatis, 1973).

Holy Mother Church in her prudence provides these laws to help us to maintain a well-balanced spiritual life, avoiding extremes – such as over scrupulosity. Just as the Church requires a person to receive Holy Communion at least once a year (e.g., “Easter duty or obligation”), so does the Church restrict the number of times any baptized Catholic may receive Communion also.

Any further questions on this subject are to be directed to the parish priest/pastor for resolution.

(SR: Catholic Straight Answers: How many times can a person receive Holy Communion each day? and the Roman Catholic Church Code of Canon (CCC) Law (@1983))