Everyday Catholicism

Why Do Catholics Fast Before Receiving Holy Communion?

Why do Catholics have to fast before receiving Holy Communion?" The answer begins with what we believe about the Eucharist.

When we come forward to receive Holy Communion, we are not receiving ordinary bread. We are receiving Jesus Christ Himself: His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Because the Eucharist is the greatest gift Christ gives His Church, the Church asks us to prepare before we receive Him.

Catholics have fasted before Communion since the early centuries of the Church. The length of the fast has changed over time. For many generations it began at midnight; today Catholics fast for at least one hour before receiving Communion, from all food and drink except water and medicine.

Why does the Church ask this of us?

The fast reminds us that our deepest hunger is for Christ. Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven" (John 6:51). Going without food for a short time, even a single hour, teaches us that the One we are about to receive is unlike any other food.

The fast does not prepare Christ to come to us. It prepares us to receive Him. Scripture often joins fasting to prayer, and the Eucharistic fast works the same way. That hour before Mass can become a quiet prayer of expectation.

The Church also knows fasting is not possible for everyone. The elderly, the sick, and those who care for them are excused from the obligation, as is anyone who needs water or medicine.

So the next time you come forward for Holy Communion, remember that the fast is a preparation, not merely a rule. The Church gives it to us so that we come to the altar ready to receive Christ Himself.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: nos. 1384-1389.
Code of Canon Law: can. 919.

Have a question about the Catholic faith? Submit it to the parish office for a future edition of Everyday Catholicism.



ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

360 Park Ave., Cayucos, CA, 93430
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16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.

The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until the whole batch was leavened.
Matthew 13: 24-43

Mass Intentions

Sat.	18	+Barbara Sharp
Sun.	19	+Dcn. Jim Cooper
Mon.	20	+Seth Dunn
Tues.	21	+Rose Romero
Wed.	22	+Mary Fatooh
Thurs.	23	Rosa Cruz
Thurs. (Spanish)	23	Todos los fieles difuntos
Fri.	24	+Benjamin William Bradley
Sat.	25	St Joseph's Parishioners
Sun.	26	Thomas & Megan Tierney

July 19, 2026

Most Reverend Bishop
Ramón Bejarano

Rev. Martel Ramos, Pastor
Pastor@SaintJosephCayucos.org

Office Hours
Monday through Thursday
10:00AM-4:30PM
Friday—Office Closed

PARISH STAFF
Judy Ann Cross, Business Administrator
BusinessAdmin@SaintJosephCayucos.org

WEEKDAY MASSES
Monday through Friday 9:00AM
Thursday 6:30PM Spanish

WEEKEND MASSES
Saturday Vigil—5:00PM
Sunday— 10:00AM

Rosary: Weekdays at 8:30AM
Adoration: Friday after 9:00AM Mass
Confessions: Friday after 9:00AM Mass
First Saturdays: 4:00PM

Message from the Pastor

Anyone who has kept a garden knows how quickly weeds appear. They grow right beside the plants we want, and when everything is still young, it can be hard to tell them apart. If we pull too soon, we may uproot a good plant along with the weeds.

In the Gospel, a man sowed good seed in his field, but during the night an enemy planted weeds among the wheat. The servants wanted to pull them out right away. The owner told them to wait because they might uproot the wheat as well.

God is patient with us. He sees the good that is growing in us, but He also knows where we still need to change. He does not give up on us when we struggle or fall into the same faults again.

We are not always so patient with one another. At home, the same disagreement may return, or someone we love may need more patience than we think we have. Even here in the parish, we may keep our distance from someone who hurt us years ago.

We sometimes judge people too quickly. We remember what they did and assume they will never change. But God has not finished working in them, just as He has not finished working in us. We can recognize what is wrong without giving up on the person.

This week, when we find ourselves losing patience, let us remember how patient God has been with us. May He help us to show that patience to one another.

Father Martel

OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults)

St. Joseph Parish invites **adults 18 years of age and older** who have not been baptized and therefore have not received the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, to begin their journey of faith through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA.)

If you know someone who has not received these sacraments, please invite them to consider this opportunity. We would be honored to accompany them as they grow in faith and prepare to receive the sacraments.

For more information or register, please contact the parish office or speak with Father Martel after Mass.

Farewell to Father Pedro

Father Pedro will be leaving our parish in early August. We invite everyone to join us as we thank him for his ministry and wish him well.

Farewell Dinner:
Wednesday, July 29, 2026 at 6PM in the parish hall. There will be time during the evening to thank Father Pedro personally.

Please RSVP on the sign-up sheets in the hall indicating the number in your party and the dish you plan to bring.

Father Pedro's Last Masses:
Saturday, August 1, 2026 at 5PM
Sunday, August 2, 2026 at 10AM

Annual Ministries Appeal

Thank you for helping St. Joseph Parish reach our Annual Ministries Appeal of $11,800.

Your generosity supports the ministries of our Diocese. All gifts received beyond our goal will be returned to St. Joseph Parish.

Thank you for your generosity. May God bless you and your families.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND INJURED

We are refreshing our parish sick list. Many people were on our sick list for a very long time and we were not sure if they were still in need of prayer.
Please let us know if you have a loved one you would like to add to the prayer list or would like a priest to visit you.
Thank you.

Steve Santi
Stan Piwowarski
Jim & Joanne Tobias
Innette Starkenburg
Steve Buller
Michael Shields
Mary Moloney
Mickey Bruno
Gary & Bonnie Nelson
Butch Rambaud
Marina Taverner
Eric Solum
Glen Bennett
Bonnie Bowman
Bill Mazzacane
Teresa Woodman