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Holy Communion

Objective The confirmands know the prerequisites for having our sins forgiven and worthily partaking of Holy Communion.

Contents The prerequisites for receiving grace and forgiveness.
The historical origins of Holy Communion.
The significance of the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion.
The powers embodied in Holy Communion.
The Seventh Article of Faith.

1 Lead-in

Ask **What is the sequence of a divine service?**

Listen to answers

Ask **Assume that due to some external circumstances we only had ten minutes available for a divine service. What would you like to do during this time? Sing, pray, hear God's word, or something else?**

Listen to answers
Explain

The central elements in the divine service are:

- the forgiveness of sins
- the celebration of Holy Communion

2 The forgiveness of sins

Ask **What must I do in order for the forgiveness of sins to have its full effect?**

Listen to answers
and supplement

The following conditions must be met in order to receive forgiveness of sins:

- I believe that the Apostles have received the commission to proclaim forgiveness of sins from Jesus Christ.
- I acknowledge that everything which runs counter to the will of God is sin (cf. Lesson 23).
- I regret my sins and know that I need grace.
- I have the earnest resolution to overcome my mistakes and weaknesses.
- I have the genuine longing to be reconciled with God and my neighbour.

In order for the absolution to have its effect on me, I must trust in it.

Summarise To have God forgive my sins I must prepare myself for this act of grace. I am responsible for this!

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Ask	How is the forgiveness of sins proclaimed?
Listen to answers and supplement	The forgiveness of sins is proclaimed through an Apostle or a priestly ministry as follows:
Read aloud	“In the commission of my sender, the Apostle, I proclaim unto you the glad tidings: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, your sins are forgiven. The peace of the Risen One abide with you! Amen.”
Explain	After God has forgiven our sins a profound peace is laid into our souls. In this condition and in awareness of the greatness and value of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice we can worthily partake of Holy Communion.
<i>Peace</i>	

3 The historical origins of Holy Communion

Hint	The confirmation teacher is to present this section without going into details.
Explain	The Israelites’ Easter (Passover) Each year the Israelites celebrate Passover. They remember that the Lord God passed over all the houses whose doorposts had been painted with the blood of the Passover lamb whereas He killed all the firstborn among the Egyptians. At the same time it is celebrated in remembrance of the liberation from slavery which followed: the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
<i>In remembrance of the Exodus</i>	
A student tells (homework)	The first Communion Before His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples, at which time He instituted Holy Communion. He took bread, gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to His disciples with the words, “Take eat; this is my body.” He then took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (cf. Matthew 26: 17–30).
<i>Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with His disciples</i>	
Explain	Holy Communion today As a rule, Christians celebrate Holy Communion on the first day of the week, that is, on the Sunday (cf. Acts 20: 7). Holy Communion is a meal of remembrance of the suffering and death of Jesus. It is a meal of fellowship with the Lord and with one another. It is a meal of profession of the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus. Apostle Paul wrote: “As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes” (1 Corinthians 11: 26). We therefore celebrate Holy Communion in every divine service until the Lord Jesus comes.
<i>We celebrate Holy Communion in every divine service</i>	

4 The significance of Holy Communion

Explain

Holy Communion is celebrated with unleavened bread and wine. These are indispensable elements of the meal. In our celebration, we use wafers made of unleavened bread sprinkled with wine. The Apostle or a priestly minister consecrates bread and wine with the following words, in order that the body and blood, as well as the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, may become present:

Read aloud

“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion and lay thereupon the once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks, and said: 'This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new covenant, which is given for many for the remission of sins. Eat and drink. Do this in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Amen.”

Hint

Holy Communion is bread and wine, but at the same time also the body and blood of Christ.

A student tells (homework)

To make the confirmands aware of the significance of Holy Communion ask the two confirmands who have read the relevant Bible passages to tell the others about Jesus Christ's suffering (cf. Matthew 27: 27–37) and crucifixion (cf. John 19: 28–34). We remember these every time we partake of Holy Communion (cf. Luke 22: 19–20; 1 Corinthians 11: 23–26).

Explain

Holy Communion is

- the fellowship with Jesus Christ for us. By worthily partaking of Holy Communion we receive the Lord Jesus within us (cf. John 6: 54, 56),
- essential for the divine life within us (cf. John 6: 53).

5 The powers embodied in Holy Communion

Explain

Natural nourishment strengthens and fortifies the body. Holy Communion strengthens a human being in the effort of consistently following Jesus Christ, overcoming evil, practising reconciliation, and attaining the goal of faith.

6 The Seventh Article of Faith

Workbook exercise

The confirmands do the exercise in their workbook. They put the elements of the Seventh Article of Faith into the correct order by numbering them. Afterwards they correctly write down this Article of Faith. (They can also complete this work at home). The article of faith is then read aloud and the confirmands are given the opportunity to ask questions.

I believe that Holy Communion was instituted by the Lord Himself in memory of the once brought, fully valid sacrifice, and bitter suffering and death of Christ. The worthy partaking of Holy Communion establishes our fellowship with Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is celebrated with unleavened bread and wine; both must be consecrated and dispensed by a minister authorised by an Apostle.

The main points

I also want to **worthily partake of Holy Communion!**

Homework

The confirmands learn the Seventh Article of Faith by heart. They do exercise A of lesson 25 in their workbook.