INTRODUCTION:

Few scenes in human history are as solemn and moving as the Last Supper. That night, in the Upper Room, the entire story of salvation was condensed: God made man shared His Body and Blood with His own, instituting the Sacrament of Love. But among the Twelve was one who, though his feet were washed like the others', had already sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. The question that scene throws at us, and which has intrigued the faithful, theologians, and saints for centuries, is: **Did Judas receive Communion?** And if he did… how is it possible for someone to receive Communion and, at the same time, betray the Son of God?

This question is not just historical or theological—it also carries **deep spiritual and pastoral implications for each of us today**. Because at every Mass, we too are seated at the table of the Lord. With what heart do we approach? With living faith, or indifference? With love… or betrayal?

Let's dive into this mystery using Scripture, the Church's Magisterium, the wisdom of the Saints, and a heart ready to listen.

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1. WHAT DO THE GOSPELS SAY?

The accounts of the Last Supper appear in all four Gospels, but the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and John tell the story differently—especially regarding **the sequence of events**.

- **Matthew 26:20–29** and **Mark 14:17–25** describe Jesus announcing the betrayal **before** instituting the Eucharist.
- **Luke 22:14–23**, however, places the institution of the Sacrament **before** the announcement of the traitor.
- **John 13**, which does not mention the institution of the Eucharist, emphasizes the washing of the disciples' feet and the moment Jesus gives a morsel to Judas as a sign of his impending betrayal.

So… **did Judas receive Communion before leaving, or had he already gone when Jesus consecrated the bread and wine?**

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2. THE QUESTION THAT DIVIDES THEOLOGIANS

Throughout Church history, **there have been two major theological positions** on this topic:

a. **Yes, Judas did receive Communion.**

This view was held by Church Fathers such as **St. Augustine** and **St. John Chrysostom**, as well as many later theologians. According to this interpretation:

- Judas remained for the entire meal and received the consecrated bread and wine like the others.
- Jesus, knowing Judas would betray Him, **offered His Body out of love**, giving him one last chance to repent.
- Judas rejected that grace, turning his Communion into a **sacrilegious act of final betrayal**.

This perspective, while deeply dramatic, highlights the **inexhaustible mercy of Christ**, who offers even the traitor a path to redemption.

b. **No, Judas did not receive Communion.**

This position was defended by, among others, **St. Thomas Aquinas** and many medieval theologians. They argue:

- John 13 says: *"After receiving the morsel, he immediately went out. And it was night."*
- The "morsel" Jesus gave Judas was **not the Eucharist**, but a gesture of courtesy (a piece of bread dipped in sauce), typical in Jewish meals.
- Therefore, Judas would have **left before the institution of the Sacrament**.

This view reinforces the idea that **receiving Communion requires faith and proper disposition**, and that Christ would not have allowed such a grave sacrilege at that most sacred moment.

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3. WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SAY?

The **Magisterium of the Church has not dogmatically defined** whether Judas received

Communion or not. In other words, **there is no definitive answer that must be believed**. It remains open to interpretation, though it has serious spiritual implications.

However, liturgy, tradition, and pastoral sense have often emphasized **the danger of sacrilegious Communion**, using Judas as a powerful warning.

St. Paul already warned the early Christians:

> *"Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:27–29)*

Many Church Fathers saw Judas as **a symbol of the Christian who receives Communion while in mortal sin**—someone who is **physically present at the altar but spiritually absent**. That is, **their body approaches the Lord, but their heart is far from Him**.

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4. PASTORAL DIMENSION: WHAT DOES THIS MYSTERY TEACH US TODAY?

Even if we don't know for sure whether Judas received Communion, we do know this: **his heart was not in communion with Christ**. And that is what truly matters.

Today, thousands of Catholics receive Communion every Sunday. Many **without going to Confession for months or years**, or **without a clear awareness of what they are receiving**. Have we not, many times, become little Judases?

a. **Communion is not an automatic right.**

It is an immense gift, but it requires that we **be in a state of grace**—which means having confessed mortal sins and sincerely desiring to live in friendship with Christ.

b. **Communion without faith or conversion is sacrilege.**

And it's not just a matter of "lack of devotion," but a **grave offense** against the Body of the Lord. As the Catechism says:

> *"Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to Communion."*
> *(CCC 1385)*

c. **Judas had everything… and rejected it.**

He lived with Jesus, heard His words, saw His miracles, took part in the Supper… and still betrayed Him! It's not enough to be "close" to Jesus externally. We must **open our hearts, truly love Him, and let Him transform us**.

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5. JUDAS AND US: A TROUBLING MIRROR

Judas is not just a figure from the past. He is a **troubling mirror for each of us**.

- Every time we choose sin over the love of God, we are **selling Him for our thirty pieces of silver**: comfort, pleasure, vanity, pride…
- Every time we receive Communion without confession, without forgiveness in our hearts, **we are betraying Him with a kiss**.
- But every time we repent with humility, Jesus is there to forgive us—**just as He forgave Peter**, who also denied Him.

The difference between Peter and Judas is not the sin, but **the response to the love of Christ**. Peter wept, returned, and was embraced. Judas despaired and closed himself to forgiveness.

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6. THE FINAL MESSAGE: THE TABLE IS STILL SET

Jesus continues to celebrate His Supper in every Mass. He continues to break the Bread and give Himself for us. He still washes our feet, looks at us tenderly… and asks:

"Do you love Me?"

Before approaching Communion, examine your heart. Is there something you need to

confess? Someone you need to forgive? A wound you need to offer? **Do not be afraid. Run to the confessional. Run to Love.**

Because if we receive Communion like Judas today, we risk walking away forever. But if we receive it like John, reclining on the heart of Christ, then **the Eucharist will transform and save us**.

CONCLUSION:

Did Judas receive Communion? Maybe yes. Maybe no. But that is not the most important question.

The real question is: How do *you* receive Communion?

May this reflection lead us to a deeper faith, a more conscious Communion, and a more authentic love for the Blessed Sacrament. Because, in the end, **everything comes down to that moment when you approach the altar… and Jesus looks you in the eyes.**