

## COMMUNION AT ST. GEORGE

Fr. Alexander

At holy communion, we partake of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is unthinkable to allow even a particle of lipstick to enter the cup through the spoon.

Some ladies have suggested that the church should recommend the kind of lipstick that does not leave traces on the spoon, on icons, on crosses, etc. The church is not going to recommend any lipstick. Another popular answer is that lip gloss is not lipstick. It is unthinkable to allow even a particle of lip gloss into the cup through the spoon.

Such answers as given above are founded on the premise that a woman is a special kind of human being, one that needs to have color on her lips, even when she worships. This is not an Orthodox view of a woman, and it is not acceptable.

The recommendation of the church is that communion should be respected as a sacrament. Whether you are a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl, the approach is the same. We come before God in humility, as we truly are. We take care how we stand, walk and talk, and what image we project by what we wear.

If a guest comes to church with lipstick on, we do not ask that person to leave. We welcome all people (within reason, of course), but we do not necessarily adopt their ways. If we do not agree with having the image of Christ, we should not be in the communion line. There is no room, in the Orthodox Church, for a Hollywood image; it is not consistent with the humility that pervades Orthodox worship.

In practice, please remove all lip wear (with soap and water, if necessary) before standing in the communion line. After the liturgy, one can use lipstick or not. No one will make an issue. For church, however, it is an issue. Please understand that there is order in God's church.