AN ALTERNATE ORDER FOR THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Abridged Form

See rubrics in two previous Orders.

Prayer

Instead of this entire prayer; the last paragraph only may be read, or other suitable prayers may be substituted for those here given.

It is very meet and right, above all things, to give thanks unto thee, O eternal God. For all thy bounties known to us, for all unknown, we give thee thanks; but chiefly, that when, through disobedience, we had fallen from thee, thou didst not suffer us to depart from thee forever, but hast ransomed us from eternal death, and given us the joyful hope of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ thy Son; who, being true and eternal God, became Man for us men, and for our salvation.

Not as we ought but as we are able, we bless thee for his holy incarnation; for his life on earth; for his precious sufferings and death upon the cross; for his resurrection from the dead; and for his glorious ascension to thy right hand.

We bless thee for the giving of the Holy Spirit; for the sacraments and ordinances of the Church; for the communion of Christ’s body and blood; for the great hope of everlasting life, and of an eternal weight of glory.

Thee, mighty God, heavenly King, we magnify and praise. With angels and archangels, and all the hosts of heaven, we worship and adore thy glorious name.

We most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to vouchsafe unto us thy gracious presence, as we commemorate in this Supper the most blessed sacrifice of thy Son; and to bless and sanctify with thy Word and Spirit these thine own gifts of bread and wine, which we set before thee; that we, receiving them, according to our Savior’s institution, in thankful remembrance of his death and passion, may, through the power of the Holy Spirit, be made true partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to our salvation and the glory of thy most holy name. Amen.
Words of Institution

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, attend to the words of the institution of the holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are delivered by the holy Apostle Paul:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.”

Exhortation to Self-Examination

That we may now celebrate the Supper of the Lord to our comfort, it is necessary, first, rightly to examine ourselves, and, secondly, to direct the Supper to that end for which it was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let everyone, therefore, first consider his sins and the curse due to him for them, that he may truly humble himself before God. Let everyone also examine his own heart, whether he believes this faithful promise of God, that all his sins are forgiven him only for the sake of the passion and death of Jesus Christ; and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed and freely given to him as his own, even as perfectly as if he had satisfied in his own person for all his sins and fulfilled all righteousness. Finally, let everyone examine his own conscience, whether he purposes henceforth to show true thankfulness to God in his whole life, to walk uprightly before him, and to live in love and peace with his neighbor.

All those who are thus minded God will certainly receive in mercy, and count them worthy partakers of the Table of his Son Jesus Christ. On the contrary, according to the command of Christ and the Apostle Paul, we admonish all those who are continuing in unrepented sin to keep themselves from the Lord’s Table.

But this is not designed, dearly beloved Brethren and Sisters in the Lord, to distress the contrite hearts of his people, as if none might come to his Table but those who are without sin. For we do not come to this Supper to
testify that we are righteous in ourselves, but rather that we are conscious of our sinfulness and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation. Therefore, notwithstanding we feel that we have not perfect faith, and that we do not serve God with such zeal as we are bound, but have daily to strive with the weakness of our faith and the evil lusts of our flesh; yet, since we are, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, sorry for these weaknesses, and earnestly desirous to fight against our unbelief and to live according to all the commandments of God, therefore we rest assured that no sin or infirmity, which still remains against our will in us, can hinder us from being received of God in mercy, and from being made worthy partakers of this heavenly food.

Meaning of the Sacrament

Let us also consider to what end the Lord has instituted his Supper: “This do,” he said, “in remembrance of me.”

We are, therefore, to remember that our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the promises made in the Old Testament, was sent of the Father into the world; that he assumed our flesh and blood; that he bore for us the wrath of God, under which we should have perished everlastingly; that he fulfilled for us all obedience to the divine law; that he, although innocent, was condemned to death that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat of God; that he took upon himself the curse due to us, that he might fill us with his blessings; that he humbled himself unto death, even the bitter and shameful death of the cross, when he cried out with a loud voice, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” that we might be accepted of God and never be forsaken of him; and finally, that he confirmed with the shedding of his blood the new and eternal covenant of grace and reconciliation, when he said, “It is finished.”

That we might firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, instituted the holy Supper, thus teaching us that as often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup, we are thereby, as by a sure remembrance and pledge, admonished and assured of his hearty love and faithfulness toward us; that, whereas we should otherwise have suffered eternal death, he has given his body to the death of the cross, and shed his blood for us; and will as certainly feed and nourish our hungry and thirsty souls with his crucified body and shed blood to everlasting life, as this bread is broken before our eyes, and this cup is given to us, and we eat and drink in remembrance of him.
From this institution of the holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see that he directs our faith and trust to his perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as the only ground of our salvation; wherein he is become to our hungry and thirsty souls the true meat and drink of life eternal. For by his death he has taken away the cause of our eternal death and misery, namely, sin; and obtained for us the quickening Spirit, that we by the same Spirit, which dwells in Christ as the Head and in us as his members, may have true communion with him, and be made partakers of all his blessings, of life eternal, righteousness and glory.

So also are we, by the Holy Spirit, to be united as members of one body, in true brotherly love; as the holy Apostle saith, “For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

Here the invitation to partake of the Sacrament may be given to communicants present who are not members of this particular church. If desired, a hymn may then be sung: during which the table may be uncovered and the minister approach thereto, and any necessary change of place among the communicants may be made.

Prayer

Let us pray.

We here present ourselves to thee, O Lord, our souls and bodies, to be a holy and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that all who are partakers of this holy Communion may be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction. And though we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer to thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits but pardoning our offenses; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Or,

O most merciful God and Father, we beseech thee that thou wilt be pleased, in this Supper, in which we celebrate the glorious remembrance of the bitter death of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, to work in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that we may daily, more and more, with true confidence, give
ourselves up unto thy Son Jesus Christ. May we be fed and comforted with his true body and blood; yea, with him, true God and Man, that only heavenly bread; that we may no longer live in our sins, but he in us, and we in him. Thus may we truly be partakers of the new and everlasting covenant of grace. Suffer us not to doubt that thou wilt forever be our gracious Father, never more imputing our sins unto us, and providing us, as thy beloved children and heirs, with all things necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Grant us also thy grace, that we may take upon us our cross cheerfully, deny ourselves, confess our Savior, and in all tribulations with uplifted heads expect our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, where he will make our mortal bodies like unto his most glorious body and take us unto himself for eternity. Amen.

Confession of Faith

Strengthen us also by this holy Supper in the Christian Faith, whereof we make confession with our mouths and hearts, saying:

*Here the congregation shall rise.*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic church; the communion of saints; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Communion

That we may now be fed with the true heavenly bread, Christ Jesus, let us not cleave with our hearts unto the external bread and wine, but lift them up on high in heaven, where Christ Jesus is our Advocate, at the right hand of his heavenly Father, whither all the Articles of our Faith lead us; not doubting that, through the working of the Holy Spirit, we shall as certainly be fed and refreshed in our souls with his body and blood, as we receive the holy bread and wine in remembrance of him.
In breaking and distributing the bread, the minister shall say:

The Bread which we break is the communion of the Body of Christ.

And when he gives the cup:

The Cup of Blessing which we bless is the communion of the Blood and Christ.

Communion Thanksgiving

After the Communion, the minister shall proceed as follows, the congregation reading its part responsively:

Beloved in the Lord, since the Lord has now fed our souls at his Table, let us therefore jointly praise his holy name with thanksgiving, and everyone say with mouth and heart thus:

Bless the Lord, O my soul:
   And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
   And forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
   Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
   Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
   Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins;
   Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For as the heaven is high above the earth,
   So great is his mercy toward them that fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
   So far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
Like as a father pitieth his children,
   So the Lord pitieth them that fear him.
Who hath not spared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, and given us all things with him.
   Therefore shall my mouth and heart show forth the praise of the Lord from this time forth forevermore. Amen.
Prayer

O almighty, merciful God and Father, we render thee most humble and hearty thanks, that thou hast, of thine infinite mercy, given us thine only be-gotten Son, for a mediator and a sacrifice for our sins, and to be our meat and drink unto life eternal. Grant, we beseech thee, O faithful God and Fa-ther, that through the operation of thy Holy Spirit, the commemoration of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ may tend to the daily increase of our faith, and of our saving fellowship with him; through Jesus Christ thy Son, in whose name we conclude our prayers, saying:

Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

At the conclusion of the Communion, the table should again be covered.