

PREPARING FOR THE NEW TRANSLATION COMMUNION RITE (PART III)



Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>Then the priest joins his hands and says inaudibly:</i></p> <p>Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit your death brought life to the world. By your holy body and blood free me from all my sins and from every evil. Keep me faithful to your teaching, and never let me be parted from you.</p> <p><i>Or:</i></p> <p>Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy I eat your body and drink your blood. Let it not bring me to condemnation, but health in mind and body.</p>	<p><i>Then the Priest, with hands joined, says quietly:</i></p> <p>Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit, through your Death gave life to the world; free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood, from all my sins and from every evil; keep me always faithful to your commandments, and never let me be parted from you.</p> <p><i>Or:</i></p> <p>May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgment and condemnation, but through your loving mercy be for me protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy.</p>

COMMENTARY:

In the United States, this is the point where the congregation returns to the posture of kneeling and prays quietly preparing themselves for Holy Communion. The priest prepares himself to receive Holy Communion as stands at the altar with hands joined saying one of these prayers. These prayers are to be said quietly by the priest, so most of the faithful will not notice the change in these translations unless they are following along in a missal or are familiar with the Current Translation. With respect to the first of these prayers, most of the differences between the two translations are a result of the Current Translation's preference for shorter sentences and avoidance of relative clauses that

begin with the word "who." The two exceptions are the omission of the word "**always**" and the choice of the word "**teaching**" in place of the word "**commandments**". Teachings, which concern truth, are the object of the intellect, properly speaking, while commands are more properly the object of the will. In God there is no real distinction between intellect and will on account of his perfect unity, but there is with us. The petition of the priest is that through the power of the Body and Blood of Christ his will might always be conformity with the commands, and therefore the will, of Christ.

The second option shows more noticeable changes between the two translations. The Current Translation is more of a paraphrase that divides the one long Latin sentence into two shorter English ones. Missing from the Current Translation is the petition by the priest concerning the possibility of condemnation for unworthily receiving Christ's Body and Blood. This petition calls to mind the words of St. Paul: *For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself* (1 Cor. 11:29). The New Translation also petitions for "**protection**" of mind and body and that the Body and Blood of Christ be "**a healing remedy**" which better describes the power of the Eucharist as both spiritually preventative of falling into mortal sin and curative with respect to daily faults.

Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>The priest genuflects. Taking the host, he raises it slightly over the paten and, facing the people, says aloud:</i></p> <p>This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those called to his supper.</p>	<p><i>The Priest genuflects, takes the host and, holding it slightly raised above the paten or above the chalice, while facing the people, says aloud:</i></p> <p>Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.</p>

<p><i>The He adds, once only, with the people:</i></p> <p>Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.</p> <p><i>Facing the altar, the priest says inaudibly:</i></p> <p>May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.</p> <p><i>He reverently consumes the body of Christ. Then he takes the chalice and says inaudibly:</i></p> <p>May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life.</p> <p><i>He reverently drinks the blood of Christ.</i></p>	<p><i>And together with the people he adds once:</i></p> <p>Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.</p> <p><i>The Priest, facing the altar, says quietly:</i></p> <p>May the Body of Christ keep me safe for eternal life.</p> <p><i>And he reverently consumes the Body of Christ. Then he takes the chalice and says quietly:</i></p> <p>May the Blood of Christ keep me safe for eternal life.</p> <p><i>And he reverently consumes the Blood of Christ.</i></p>
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COMMENTARY:

During the “Fraction Rite” the faithful sing (or say) the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God). The showing of the sacred species again invokes this title, and it is a fuller citing of the words of John the Baptist from Jn. 1:29 with the inclusion of the word “**Behold**” as found in the New Translation, and the use of the same vocabulary helps foster the development of the biblical language that should penetrate and inform our entire spiritual lives. Likewise the Current Translation’s use of “**his**” in lieu of “**the supper of the Lamb**” obscures the allusions to the paschal lamb of Exodus 12, whose blood saved Israel, and to all of the references to the Lamb in the Book of Revelation, which concludes with the bride of the Lamb [the Church] being united to her spouse (cf. Rev. 21:9; 22:17).

The instruction governing the showing of the Eucharistic species by the priest while he says these words has changed in the Latin typical edition. The priest now has the option of holding the host over the chalice while saying these words. Previously the rubrics had only mentioned doing so over the paten.

With respect to the response itself, the New Translation is more recognizably an appropriation of the words of the centurion from the Gospel of Matthew than is the Current Translation. *The centurion said in reply, “**Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed**”* (Matt. 8:8). We express the humility of the centurion and his faith in Jesus Christ’s power to heal as our own. In receiving Holy Communion, we receive Christ in the form of food, and He come “under my roof” and into my soul. The New Translation’s uses the words “**my soul**” in lieu of “**I**” simply removes a bias in the Current Translation against the mention of “soul.”

The words said by the priest as he receives the Body and Blood of Christ change between the two translations with “**eternal**” replacing “**everlasting**” and the petition “**keep me safe for**” replacing “**bring me to.**” We’ve mentioned before that the word “**eternal**” points to the uncreated or the Divine whereas “**everlasting**” indicates something that has a beginning in time. The petition is for persevering grace, so that the priest may spend all of eternity rejoicing in the beatific vision—a certain share in the Divine, eternal life.

Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>After this, he takes the paten or other vessel and goes to the communicants. He takes a host for each one, raises it a little, and shows it saying:</i></p> <p>The Body of Christ.</p> <p><i>The communicant answers:</i></p> <p>Amen.</p> <p><i>And receives communion.</i></p> <p><i>When a deacon gives communion, he does the same.</i></p>	<p><i>After this, he takes the paten or ciborium and approaches the communicants. The Priest raises a host slightly and shows it to each of the communicants, saying:</i></p> <p>The Body of Christ.</p> <p><i>The communicant replies:</i></p> <p>Amen.</p> <p><i>And receives Holy Communion.</i></p> <p><i>If a Deacon also distributes Holy Communion, he does so in the same manner.</i></p>

Here the translation changes apply only to the rubrics. The mention of “**ciborium**” should clarify that a bread basket is not a valid form of an “**other vessel**”.

