

PREPARING FOR THE NEW TRANSLATION EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER I (PART II)



Current Translation	New Translation
<p>In union with the whole Church we honor Mary, the ever-virgin mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God. † We honor Joseph, her husband, the apostles and martyrs</p> <p>Peter and Paul, Andrew, (James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude; we honor Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian) and all the saints. May their merits and prayers gain us your constant help and protection.</p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen)</p>	<p><i>Within the Action.</i></p> <p>In communion with those whose memory we venerate, especially the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ, † and blessed Joseph, her Spouse, your blessed Apostles and Martyrs,</p> <p>Peter and Paul, Andrew, (James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude: Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian)</p> <p>and all your Saints: we ask that through their merits and prayers, in all things we may be defended by your protecting help.</p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)</p>

COMMENTARY:

In Latin, this section is known as “*In Communicantes*” taken from the opening words of the section. In this section, we continue to see that our Current Translation gives us a stripped down and more horizontalized version of the prayer. “**In communion with those whose memory we ven-**

erate” states much more clearly the belief that in the celebration of the Eucharist we join all the angels and saints in heaven in their worship. This same belief is not excluded from “**in union with the whole Church**” since the whole Church includes the Church triumphant—those in heaven, but the Current Translation is unnecessarily vague here. The honorific modifiers used with respect to the Mother of God are certainly clearer in the New Translation. The Current Translation leaves out the title **Mother of our God** in its cavalier translating of the Latin text. The Council of Ephesus (431) centered around the orthodoxy of the use of this title with respect to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The opinion that she could only be called the Mother of Christ, and not the Mother of God, was condemned as a heresy. The major point of controversy was how Christ was both God and man each title stood for a different position. **Mother of God** confirms the belief that Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man from the moment of his conception and as birth-giver to the one Divine Person possessing two complete natures (human and Divine) Mary was rightfully called the **Mother of God.**

Following the mention of the **Mother of God**, the sign † appears. There are special variations here for certain feasts of the year, such as Christmas, Holy Thursday, and Easter. For brevity’s sake, we will not examine those here.

The first of the list of saints is St. Joseph; the honorific **blessed** will now be restored to his name. He was added to the Roman Canon in 1962 by Pope Bl. John XXIII the first alteration of the list of saints since the perhaps the seventh century if not before. Prior to the addition of his name, there were 40 saints mentioned by name representing all categories of saints venerated in the Church of Rome for centuries: the twelve apostles (St. Paul takes the place of St. Matthias here, but St. Matthias is mentioned when the list continues after the consecration), the first successors to St. Peter as pope, early martyrs, etc. The Current Translation added the words **we honor** in the midst of the list to break it up into shorter sentences. The New Translation seeks to honor the structure of the Typical Latin edition.

Finally in this section, we notice that the language of petition in the New Translation is more formal and elevated even if the general sense is not changed.

Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>With hands extended, he continues:</i></p> <p>Father, accept this offering from your whole family. Grant us your peace in this life, save us from final damnation, and count us among those you have chosen.</p> <p><i>He joins his hands.</i></p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)</p>	<p><i>With hands extended, the Priest continues:</i></p> <p>Therefore, Lord, we pray: graciously accept this oblation of our service, that of your whole family; order our days in your peace, and command that we be delivered from eternal damnation and counted among the flock of those you have chosen.</p> <p><i>He joins his hands.</i></p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)</p>

COMMENTARY:

One of the predilections of the Current Translation, which is more noticeable in the Presidential Prayers (Opening Prayer/Collect, Prayer over the Gifts, Prayer after Communion), was to replace the word **Lord** with **Father**. True, we are praying to the same Person, but the deliberate choice as well as the removal of many of the modifying words results in an unfortunate and distorted horizontalization within the liturgy. In our weakness towards pride, being reminded that we are not on the same level as God is not a bad thing!

In Latin, this part of the prayer is known as the *Hanc igitur*, from the first words that translate into English word-for-word as *this therefore*. (This section too has a couple variations for Holy Thursday and the Easter Vigil, which we will not examine in this column.) The *this* is the oblation/offering being made. The New Translation no longer gives God orders (**Father, accept**) but makes the petition (**Therefore, Lord, we pray: graciously accept**). We are in the midst of the heavenly court, not the family den; the Latin language reflects this. The New Translation will do so as well.

Our petition concerning the gift of peace will in the New Translation more clearly express the belief that true and lasting peace comes from a life that is ordered according to the will of God. This always correspond to the graces He first gives us and our human nature, which He also created. The plea to be saved from **eternal damnation**, i.e. **command**, communicates the importance of this petition. The language describing those chosen, in the New Translation, will restore the biblical imagery of a shepherd and his flock.

Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>With hands outstretched over the offerings, he says:</i></p> <p>Bless and approve our offering; make it acceptable to you, an offering in spirit and in truth. Let it become for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord.</p> <p><i>He joins his hands.</i></p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)</p>	<p><i>Holding his hands extended over the offerings, he says:</i></p> <p>Be pleased, O God, we pray, to bless, acknowledge, and approve this offering in every respect; make it spiritual and acceptable, so that it may become for us the Body and Blood of your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p><i>He joins his hands.</i></p> <p>(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)</p>

COMMENTARY:

This part of the prayer is called the *epiclesis*, a Greek word which combines the preposition *epi* (here meaning upon) and the word *clesis* (a form of the word “to call”). It is here that the Priest extends his hands over the oblation and calls down the Holy Spirit, so that, as the prayer says, they **may become for us the Body and Blood of your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ**. As with the previous paragraph, the New Translation restores the deference and elevated language of the Latin text. Restored too are the words **most beloved** in reference to Jesus Christ, which should call to mind those words spoken from heaven at the Transfiguration: *This is my beloved son. Listen to him.* (Mk. 9:7c). Here it is the elements of bread and wine that will be transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ by the power of His Word. Listen to Him.

