

PREPARING FOR THE NEW TRANSLATION

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER I (PART VI)



Current Translation	New Translation
<i>Bowing, with hands joined, he continues:</i>	<i>Bowing, with hands joined, he continues:</i>
Almighty God, we pray that your angel may take this sacrifice to your altar in heaven. Then, as we receive from this altar the sacred body and blood of your Son,	In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God: command that these gifts be borne by the hands of your holy Angel to your altar on high in the sight of your divine majesty , so that all of us who through this participation at the altar receive the most holy Body and Blood of your Son,
<i>He stands up straight and makes the sign of the cross, saying:</i>	<i>He stands upright again and signs himself with the Sign of the Cross, saying:</i>
Let us be filled with every grace and blessing.	may be filled with every grace and heavenly blessing.
<i>He joins his hands.</i>	<i>He joins his hands.</i>
[Through Christ our Lord. Amen.]	(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

COMMENTARY:

The Current Translation's paraphrasing and stripping out of some of the sacred language is again evident. Aside from the all of the modifiers (e.g. **in humble, holy, heavenly**) that set a more sacral tone, the most significant change in the text of the New Translation are the words "**so that**" which replace the word "**Then**" found in Current Translation revealing a causal relationship between the taking of the gifts by the holy Angel to God's presence and the grace and **heavenly** blessings that flow from receiving the **most holy** Body and Blood of Christ. In the Current Translation, the division of this sentence into smaller segments weakens this

connection. Notice how the New Translation illustrates the link between **participating at the altar** (joining in the sacrifice through the spiritual offering of ourselves in union with Christ) and receiving His **most holy Body and Blood**.

Current Translation	New Translation
<i>Commemoration of the Dead</i>	<i>Commemoration of the Dead</i>
<i>With hands extended he says:</i>	<i>With hands extended, the Priest says:</i>
Remember, Lord, those who have died and have gone before us marked with the sign of faith especially those for whom we now pray , N. and N.	Remember also, Lord, your servants N. and N., who have gone before us with the sign of faith and rest in the sleep of peace .
<i>The priest prays for them briefly with joined hands. Then, with hands extended, he continues:</i>	<i>He joins his hands and prays briefly for those who have died and for whom he intends to pray. Then, with hands extended, he continues:</i>
May these , and all who sleep in Christ, find in your presence light, happiness , and peace.	Grant them, O Lord, we pray , and all who sleep in Christ, a place of refreshment , light and peace.
<i>He joins his hands.</i>	<i>He joins his hands.</i>
[Through Christ our Lord. Amen.]	(Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

COMMENTARY:

Before the consecration, there was a place to remember the living, particularly those for whom the sacrifice of the Mass is being offered. We now come to the point in Eucharistic Prayer I (Roman Canon) where mention may be made of the faithful departed, particularly those for whom the Mass

is offered. The priest usually says the names silently during the moment of silence.

In Baptism, Christ gives to those reborn a seal, stamp, or *sign* that indicate that they belong to Him. It is this sign of ownership by Christ that assures entrance into everlasting life to those who have preserved it inviolate. All who die *in Christ*, in a state of sanctifying grace, are connected through the bonds of charity with the living. The same bonds of charity make it possible to intercede for the faithful departed, that they might be loosed from any temporary punishment due to sin. The tradition of praying for the faithful departed finds biblical support in 2 Maccabees 12:38-46, and may be found in the writings of the early Church, particularly in the Martyrdom of Ss. Perpetua and Felicity (late second century), and the request made by St. Monica of her son, St. Augustine, to “remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you may be” (cf. *The Confessions*, IX.11).

The New Translation’s use of “**rest in the sleep of peace**” to describe those who have died reflects not only the Latin text but also alludes to St. Paul’s usage in 1 Thess. 4:14: *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.*

The petition for the faithful departed uses more *hieratic* (or priestly) language in the New Translation although the substance of the petition is largely the same with one exception. The word “**happiness**” is replaced with “**refreshment**”. Refreshment is what the Psalmist seeks in Psalm 23 (NAB, 1970): *The Lord is my shepherd...he refreshes my soul.*

Current Translation	New Translation
<i>With hands extended, he continues:</i>	<i>He strikes his breast with his right hand, saying:</i>
For ourselves, too, we ask some share in the fellowship of your apostles and martyrs, with John the Baptist, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas (Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicity, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia) and all the saints.	To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners,
<i>The priest strikes his breast with the right hand, saying:</i>	<i>And, with hands extended, he continues:</i>
Though we are sinners, we trust in your mercy and love.	hope in your abundant mercies, graciously grant some share and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs: with John the Baptist, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, (Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicity, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anasta-

<i>With hands extended as before, he continues:</i>	sia) and all your Saints: admit us, we beseech you, into their company, not weighing our merits, but granting us your pardon,
Do not consider what we truly deserves, but grant us your forgiveness.	
<i>He joins his hands.</i>	<i>He joins his hands.</i>
Through Christ our Lord.	through Christ our Lord.

Commentary:

After praying for the deceased, the Roman Canon includes petitions for ourselves, that we might share eternal bliss with the saints after having our offenses pardoned. Between the Current and New Translations, you will notice that the very order of the prayer has changed. The Current Translation, for some unspecified reason, reordered this part of the prayer; the Latin original has undergone no change during this period, and the New Translation shows the intended structure of the prayer. This prayer specifies what we mean when we pray for “**every grace and heavenly blessing.**”

The priest—God’s servant and yet a sinner—must hope in the mercies of God before he can hope to share in the fellowship of the saints. The same may be said of all Christians. The granting of pardon is a prerequisite of sharing in the fellowship of the saints, and not an unconnected act, as the Current Translation might mislead some to conclude.

In this prayer we now find the second list of saints especially venerated by the ancient Church in Rome. Adding these 15 names with those 25 from the first half of Roman Canon (excluding St. Joseph whose name was only added in 1962), one come to a total of 40 symbolizing the fullness of the communion of saints. Likewise this fullness is symbolized by the different categories of saints represented. Nearly all are believed to have been martyrs, but we find apostles, popes, deacons, virgins, and laymen all included among these martyrs. The martyrs, as the name suggests, *bear witness*, to pray for a share in their fellowship is to petition for the grace to also *bear witness* to Christ in our daily lives.

