

# Simple Prayers For Holy Communion

By a Catholic who goes to Mass.

Catholic Truth Society of Manila No.pr050 (1950)

## BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION.

Prayer for Help. — O my God, help me to make a good Communion. Mary, my dearest mother, pray to Jesus for me. My dear angel guardian, lead me to the altar of God.

Act of Faith. — O God, because You have said it, I believe that I shall receive the Sacred Body of Jesus Christ to eat, and His Precious Blood to drink. My God, I believe this with all my heart.

Act of Humility. — My God, I confess that I am a poor sinner. I am not worthy to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ on account of my sins. Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.

Act of Sorrow. — My God, I detest all the sins of my life, I am sorry for them, because they have offended You, my God, who are so good. I resolve never to commit sin any more. My good God, pity me. Have mercy on me. Forgive me.

Act of Adoration. — O Jesus, great God, present on the Altar, I bow down before You. I adore You.

Act of Love and Desire. — Sweet Jesus, I love You, I desire with all my heart to receive You. My most sweet Jesus, come into my poor soul, and give me Your flesh to eat and Your Blood to drink. Give me Your whole Self, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, that I may live for ever with You.

## AFTER HOLY COMMUNION.

Before reading the following prayers, it is highly recommended to spend a few minutes in adoration.

Act of Faith. — O Jesus, I believe that I have received Your flesh to eat and Your Blood to drink, because You have said it, and Your word is true.

Act of Adoration. — O Jesus, my God, my Creator, I adore You, because from Your hands I came and with You I am to be happy for ever.

Act of Humility. — O Jesus, I am but dust and ashes, and yet You have come to me, that my poor heart may speak to You.

Act of Love. — Sweet Jesus, I love You. I love You with all my heart. You know that I love You, and wish to love You daily more and more.

Act of Thanksgiving. — My good Jesus, I thank You with all my heart. How good, how kind You are to me, sweet Jesus. Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Act of Offering. — O Jesus, receive my poor offering.

Jesus, You have given Yourself to me, now let me give myself to You.

— I give You my body that it may be chaste and pure.

— I give You my soul, that it may be free from sin.  
— I give You my heart, that it may always love You.  
— I give You every breath that I shall breathe, and especially my last.  
— I give You myself in life and in death, that I may be with You for ever and ever.

Remember the words of Jesus, “ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE,”  
and PRAY FOR YOURSELF.

O Jesus, wash away my sins with Your Precious Blood.

O Jesus, the struggle against temptation is not yet finished.  
My Jesus, when temptation comes near me, make me strong against it.  
In the moment of temptation may I always say, “Jesus, mercy!” “Mary, help!”

O Jesus, may I lead a good life! May I die a happy death. May I receive You before I die. May I say when I am dying, “Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.”

Listen now for a moment to Jesus Christ, perhaps He has something to say to you. There may be some promise you have made and broken, which He wishes you to make again and keep.

Answer Jesus in your heart, and tell Him all your troubles.

Then PRAY FOR OTHERS.

O Jesus, have mercy on Your Holy Church; take care of it. O Jesus, have pity on poor sinners, and save them from hell. O Jesus, bless my father, my mother, my brothers and sisters, and all I ought to pray for, as Your kind Heart knows how to bless them.

O Jesus, have pity on the poor souls burning in the flames of Purgatory, and give them eternal rest.

BEFORE LEAVING THE CHURCH.

Sweet Jesus, I am going away for a time, but I trust not without You. You are with me by Your grace. I will never leave You by mortal sin. I do not fear to do so, though I am so weak, because I have such hope in You. Give me grace to persevere. Amen.

ANIMA CHRISTI

Prayer included in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Your wounds, hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from You.

From the evil enemy defend me.

At the hour of death, call me.

And bid me come unto You.  
That with Your saints I may praise You.  
For ever and ever. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days each time. — 7 years after Holy Communion.  
— Plenary, on the ordinary conditions, to those who recite it daily during a month.

(The Penitentials, January 9, 1854.)

[Since Vatican Council II, the church has ruled that all previously listed indulgences containing ‘times are to be listed as ‘partial indulgences’ and that plenary indulgences were to continue. Do not forget that God is never outdone in generosity.]

#### PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX.

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself upon my knees in Your sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul I pray and beseech You, that You would impress upon my heart lively sentiments of Faith, Hope, and Charity, true repentance for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment, while, with deep affection and grief of soul, I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate Your five most Precious Wounds; having before my eyes that which David spoke in prophecy of You, O good Jesus: They have pierced my hands and feet; they have numbered all my bones.

An indulgence of 10 years may be gained by reciting this prayer before a crucifix; besides, a plenary indulgence may be gained by those who have received the Sacraments and who say one Pater (Our Father), Ave (Hail Mary) and Gloria (Glory be) for the Pope.

(The Penitentials, February 2, 1934.) [See the earlier note on the Anima Christie, about Indulgences.]

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#### THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

Questions addressed to a Catholic Priest. From “Radio Replies”.

By Rev Dr Leslie Rumble, M.S.C.

(Father Rumble is himself a convert to the Catholic faith and is ideally placed to answer questions from non-Catholics about the Catholic Faith,)

Q. What is the Holy Eucharist?

I hear Catholics speak of it, but what do they mean?

It is a Sacrament instituted by Christ, in which Christ Himself is truly, really, and substantially present, that He may be offered in the Holy Mass as the Sacrifice of the New Law, and also that He may be received by us in Holy Communion for the spiritual refreshment of our souls.

Q. Here is a difficulty for me to believe what you Catholics say: Are there any signs in the Host proving that He is bodily present?

No. It is a mystery of faith. All external appearances remain as before consecration, but the substance of bread and the substance of wine are changed into the substance of Our Lord's body and

blood. The reason why we believe is not in the Host as such, but in God. He has revealed this truth, and we believe because He must know and could not tell an untruth.

Q. Did not the Jews think that they were asked to eat the very body of Christ? Yet He refuted them by saying that His body would ascend to Heaven and that the flesh profits nothing. John 6:63-64.

When Christ promised that He would give His very flesh to eat, the Jews protested because they imagined a natural and cannibalistic eating of Christ's body. Christ refuted this notion of the manner in which His flesh was to be received by saying that He would ascend into Heaven, not leaving His body in its human form upon earth. But He did not say that they were not to eat His actual body. He would thus contradict Himself, for a little earlier He had said, "My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed." John 6:56. He meant, therefore, "You will not be asked to eat My flesh in the horrible and natural way you think, for My body as you see it with your eyes will be gone from this earth. Yet I shall leave My flesh and blood in another and supernatural way which your natural and carnal minds cannot understand. The carnal or fleshly judgment profits nothing. I ask you therefore to have faith in Me and to trust Me. It is the spirit of faith which will enable you to believe, not your natural judgment." Then the Gospel goes on to say that many would not believe, and walked no more with Him; just as many to-day will not believe, and walk no more with the Catholic Church. According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church Christ's body is ascended into Heaven. But by its substance, independently of all the laws of space, which affect substance through accidental qualities, this body is present in every consecrated Host.

Q. We Protestants believe that Christ's body is really present in the Eucharist, but not by transubstantiation.

The majority of Protestants believe that His body is really absent. Those who do say that they believe in His real Presence yet deny transubstantiation illogically admit an effect yet deny the only process by which it can truly occur. If there be no transubstantiation or conversion of the substance of bread into the substance of Christ's body, then the substance of bread remains after consecration, and it is bread and not the body of Christ. People make a kind of bogey of transubstantiation as foolishly as a man would do somewhat similarly if he admitted a railway from New York to San Francisco, yet refused to admit that it could be called the transcontinental railway.

Q. The Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Nicene Creed do not mention transubstantiation. There is no record of such a doctrine until 1564 when Pius IV put it into his creed. Are we to believe the early Christians, or the doctrine of a thousand years later?

The doctrine is not in the three Creeds you mention. But they do not contain the whole of Christian doctrine. They are partial statements insisting upon certain doctrines against special errors of those times. It is true that Pius IV included the doctrine in his profession of faith, but you are wrong when you say that there was no mention of the doctrine till then. In 1551, 13 years earlier, the Council of Trent taught the doctrine explicitly. In 1274, 290 years earlier, the 2nd Council of Lyons insisted upon the admission of transubstantiation by the Greeks as a condition of return to the Catholic Church. In 1215, 349 years earlier, the 4th Lateran Council consecrated the word transubstantiation as expressing correctly the Christian doctrine of Christ's real presence by conversion of the substance of bread into the substance of His body.

In 1079, 500 years earlier, Berengarius declared in his retraction, "I acknowledge that the bread is substantially changed into the substance of Christ's body." Everybody who possessed the true Christian faith, until this year, 1079, believed in the substantial change, and there was no need to

insist upon the word, since no one denied the nature of the change. In the 4th century, all the great Fathers and writers admitted that by consecration, bread was changed into Our Lord's very body. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who died about 107 A.D., wrote, "Heretics abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess the Eucharist to be that very flesh of Jesus Christ which suffered for us." And that doctrine is all that is expressed by transubstantiation. At the Last Supper Christ said, "This is my body which is given for you." Luke 22:19. Now He either gave them His body or He did not. But He gave them His Body, for we dare not say, "Lord although you say, 'This is my body,' it is certainly not your body." However, it was not His body according to appearances and visible qualities, and it could have been His body only according to substance. Therefore, Our Lord first taught this doctrine of substantial change at least implicitly.

Q. The elements do not change, for there is no chemical difference after consecration.

Which elements do not change? In every material thing, there are two sets of elements quite distinct — substance and qualities. And no man has ever seen substance; he has seen qualities only. Thus, I see the squareness of a block of iron, but it can become round, still remaining iron. I can feel its hardness, though it can become soft in the furnace, the substance being unchanged. If it be black, it can become red; if it be cold, it can become hot; if it be heavy, by great heat, I can render it a vapor. The qualities, then, differ from the substance, or we could not change one without changing the other. And if we can change qualities without changing substance, God can certainly change substance without changing qualities. Any chemical differences are dependent upon qualities. Granted the permanence of the same accidental qualities the same chemical reactions will be apparent.

Father Frederick Faber, whilst yet an Anglican, well said, "I am worried about the Roman doctrine because, whatever may be said of the proofs for it, I do not see how any man can disprove it. If they say that the substance changes, but that all appearances remain the same, then they say that something changes of which no man has any experience and yet which reason must postulate as the reality underlying all appearances and separate from them." When you say that the elements do not change their chemical properties, I simply reply that the elements of external qualities do not change their chemical properties, and that no Catholic has ever imagined that they do. But the substance underlying those external appearances certainly does change. The fact that qualities remain unaltered is a fact of experience; the fact that the substance changes is revealed by God, and cannot be known in any other way. Yet is it not more than sufficiently guaranteed when God says so?

Q. We have only the word of the Priest for the fact.

No Catholic Priest would himself believe it were it not the doctrine of Christ. It would be the height of folly to believe it without solid evidence that Christ had taught it. God created substance and qualities, and we cannot deny to Him perfect control over them and ability to change them at His pleasure. And when Christ says, "This is My body," we have to accuse Him of falsehood or else admit that it is His body not according to the senses, but according to the underlying substance which is imperceptible to the senses.

Q. Is Christ's body anatomically and physiologically present?

Christ's real body is present. Anatomical structure and physiological modifications belong to qualities possessed by substance. After the consecration, we have the substance of Christ's body present without any external manifestation of His anatomical or physiological appearances, and the

qualities of bread remaining as the object of sense perception without any substance of bread. That substance of bread has been converted into the substance of Christ's body. And as substance is the basic reality, we rightly say that the Blessed Sacrament is the very body of Christ.

Q. Is Christ's body subject to processes of digestion?

The substance of Christ's body is not subject to processes of digestion or to any chemical reactions. The qualities of bread of course behave in their normal way, undergoing a change as they are affected by digestion. Our Lord's substantial presence ceases as these qualities cease to retain those characteristics proper to bread.

Q. If poison were present before consecration, would it be safe to consume the Eucharist?

No. People would be poisoned. The Church has never taught that poison could be converted into Christ's body, and in any case, you are dealing with chemical activities proper to qualities, and not proper to substance as such. All such objections are based upon notions excluded by Catholic teaching. And it is of little use to refute what the Catholic Church does not teach.

Q. Christ is in Heaven. How can you put Him in the tabernacle?

No Catholic denies that Christ is continually present in Heaven. He is not so present in the Eucharist that He ceases to be present in Heaven. He is in Heaven according to His natural though glorified form. The same Christ is in the Eucharist substantially, but not in the same way as He is present in Heaven. Substance as such abstracts from limitations of place and space. Locality directly belongs to the qualities of bread, which remain after consecration, and indirectly only to the substantial presence of Christ's body underlying those apparent qualities.

Q. Is not the Priest who can accomplish this thing akin to the miracle man of primitive religions?

No. The miracle-man claimed to perform his wonders by his own marvelous powers. The Priest says that the power of Christ effects the change in the Eucharist, and that he himself is but an instrument employed by Christ, and taking a very secondary place. The miracle-man depended upon the superstition and credulity of the bystanders. The Priest forbids superstition and credulity, and insists upon faith in God, a supernatural faith based upon rational foundations. The miracle-man attributed preternatural effects to natural causes, whether spiritual or material. The Catholic Church attributes supernatural effects (a vast difference!) to a supernatural cause. The miracle-man could never prove any direct commission from God. The Catholic Church can prove her direct commission from Him to the satisfaction of every intelligent man willing to inquire into her credentials with sincerity. The miracle-man tried to perform things wholly unbecoming to God, by means which have no resemblance to those relied upon by the Catholic Church, and for a purpose and end totally different.

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