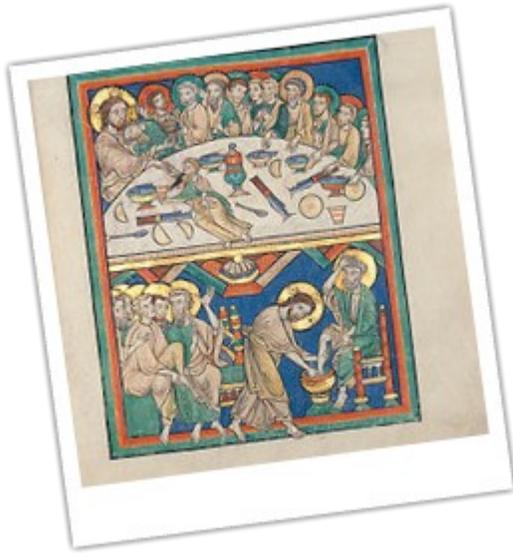


Prayers Before and After Receiving Holy Communion (the Eucharist or Holy Communion is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, our Savior)



We should take care to prepare our souls to receive the Lord before Holy Communion. St. Ignatius of Antioch, writing about 107 A.D. referred to the Eucharist the **medicine of immortality**, the **antidote against death**, enabling us to live forever in Jesus Christ. St. Paul reminds us that "as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (1 Cor. 11: 26). He warned the Corinthians and us that "... any one who eats or drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks

judgment upon himself" (1 Cor. 11: 29). Here are some examples of prayers that might be used to prepare oneself for Holy Communion:

Prayer of Saint John of Damascus (died 777 A.D.)

Master and Lord, Jesus Christ our God, You alone have authority to forgive my sins, whether committed knowingly or in ignorance, and make me worthy to receive without condemnation Your divine, glorious, pure and life-giving Mysteries, not for my punishment, but for my purification and sanctification, now and in Your future Kingdom. For You, Christ our God, are compassionate and loves mankind and to You we give glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit now and forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church (died 1274 A.D.)

Almighty and ever-living God, I approach the sacrament of your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth.

O my God I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee and I detest all of my sins because of thy just punishments but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and worthy of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Prayers After Holy Communion

After receiving our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament we should praise Him for His divine mercy, love, forgiveness and holiness. We should praise His divine providence for us and for His creation. We should thank Him for His love for us and for the many blessings He has given to us despite our unworthiness. This is a most precious time, which John J. Hampsch, C.M.F., notes in his book, *The Healing Power of the Eucharist*, is the most valuable of all prayer time because "power of the presence of Jesus gives life to our post-Communion prayer" and that nothing is more pleasing to Him than selflessly offering to serve Him out of love. He adds, "If we offer ourselves to Him to do as He pleases, to serve Him with all the fervor we can, to avoid sin and to accept the bitter and the sweet that come our way, than our Communion will really be just that--a union with God." Here are some beautiful prayers you may consider:

ANIMA CHRISTI

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 Thy wounds hide me.
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy, defend me.
In the hour of my death, call me.
And bid me come to Thee.
That with Thy saints I may praise Thee.

Prayer of St. Bonaventure (died 1274 A.D.)

Pierce, O my sweet Lord Jesus, my inmost soul with the most joyous and healthful wound of your love, with true serene and most holy apostolic charity, that my soul may ever languish and melt with love and longing for you, that it may yearn for you and faint for your courts, and long to be dissolved and to be with you. Grant that my soul may hunger after you, the bread of angels, the refreshment of holy souls, our daily and supernatural bread, having all sweetness and savor and every delight of taste; let my heart hunger after and feed upon you, upon whom the angels desire to look, and may my inmost soul be filled with the sweetness of your savor; may it ever thirst after you, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the richness of the house of God; may it ever compass you, seek you, find you, run to you, attain you, meditate upon you, speak of you and do all things to the praise and glory of your name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, and with perseverance unto the end; may you alone be ever my hope, my entire assistance, my riches, my delight, my pleasure, my joy, my rest and tranquility, my peace, my sweetness, my fragrance, my sweet savor, my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help, my wisdom, my portion, my possession and my treasure, in whom may my mind and my heart be fixed and firm and rooted immovably, henceforth and forever. Amen.

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