

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You took the dust of the earth and breathed your life into it, making humankind in your image. Because of this act of creation and your breath that lives in our spirits, everyone is of sacred worth.

Yet, from the very beginning of time, we have sought to tarnish that image. We have not seen each other with your eyes. We have not loved each other with your heart. When we have treated your sacred creation as unworthy, we not only sever our relationship with them, but also with you. Yet, you continued to be faithful in loving us. Faithful in sending your prophets throughout the ages to call us to repentance.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. When we continued to worship our personal idols instead of you, you sent Jesus to teach us to love you with all we have and all we are, not just giving you a portion of our hearts, but instead inviting you to come in and completely transform us. When we continued to harm one another, out of a desire to make ourselves appear to be more righteous, you sent us Jesus to teach us to sit and break bread together and love our neighbors as ourselves. And when we continued to choose fear instead of

faith, hatred instead of love, Jesus went to the cross to show us what love ultimately looks like, laying down your life for even those who do not love you in return. But that wasn't the end of the story. Three days later, Jesus rose from the grave to say that our hatred, our lack of love, does not have the final word. God's Kingdom will triumph.

On this day, we remember this gift of transforming love as we share together in this holy meal and tell its story anew- that on that night long ago, when Jesus gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take and eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we come together as your people, your Church, and offer our very selves into your hands in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice, only made possible because of Christ's great sacrifice for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us anew this day, and on the bread and the cup. May they stand as tangible symbols for us of the love and new life you offer to us as you call us to a life of radical grace. Bind us together, Lord, not despite our differences but through them, as you weave us together as the beautiful body of Christ. May we joyfully serve beside our brothers and sisters in a way that reclaims the sacred worth and the breath of God that resides in us, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast all together at that great heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**