

St. George's Anglican Church, Berlin
A Celebration of Spiritual Communion on Maundy Thursday, 9 April 2020

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.

The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion 'regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost' (Canon B 15).

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

The Lord is here.

The Spirit is with us.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect of Maundy Thursday

God our Father,
who have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son hath given to his Church
that it may proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is a live and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Psalm 116, 9-10.12-17

⁹ I walk before the Lord
in the land of the living.
¹⁰ I kept my faith, even when I said,
'I am greatly afflicted';
¹² What shall I return to the Lord
for all his bounty to me?
¹³ I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord,
¹⁴ I will pay my vows to the Lord

in the presence of all his people.
¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his faithful ones.
¹⁶ O Lord, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your serving-maid.
You have loosed my bonds.
¹⁷ I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice
and call on the name of the Lord.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen.**

Epistle

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26 The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Gospel

John 13:1-77.31b-35 Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet. The New Commandment

¹ Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table, ^[a] took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' ⁷ Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' ⁸ Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, ^[b] but is entirely clean. And you ^[c] are clean, though not all of you.' ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.' ¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?' ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants ^[d] are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

^{31b} Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, ^[i] God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Reflections on the Readings

Intercessions

God of compassion,
in this time of uncertainty and distress,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

God our Father, by whose mercy
the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light:
we place in your hands our unfinished tasks,
our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes,
knowing that only what you bless will prosper.
To your love and protection
we commit each other and all those we love,
knowing that you alone are our sure defender,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Prayer for the Day

Holy Father, we ask you to answer the prayer of your son Jesus Christ,
that we who believe in him may all be one;
and even as you are in him, and he in you, and in this way you are one,
so may we be in you, Father, and in your Son, and in this way be all one.
We suffer at this time of pandemics from the spatial and partly even social distance between
us. And by our temporary physical separation from each other we are reminded of the age-
long division of your Body, the one universal Church of Christ, into hundreds of national
churches and confessions. May we through our seclusion in quarantine grow in awareness of
the disunity and division of your worldwide Church. Grant that we soon will be reunited
again in our church building, yet remain disquieted about the disunity among Christians and
engage in interchurch fellowship. This we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Act of Contrition

I love you, Jesus, my love above all things, and I repent with my whole heart of having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again, grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will. Amen.

Act of Spiritual Reception

**O loving God, in union with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Eucharist, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of your dear Son, I offer you praise and thanksgiving. Even though I am exiled from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Life I pray that you will unite me with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us.
Come Lord Jesus, dwell in me and send your Holy Spirit that I may be filled with your presence. Amen.**

Hymn '252 Now, my tongue, the mystery telling, vv. 3-6 Words by St Thomas Aquinas

**3 That last night, at supper lying,
'mid the Twelve, his chosen band,
Jesus, with the law complying,
Keeps the feast its rites demand;
then, more precious food supplying,
gives himself with his own hand.**


**4 Word-made-flesh, true bread he maketh
by his word his flesh to be,
wine his blood; which whoso taketh
must from carnal thoughts be free:
faith alone, though sight forsaketh,
shows true hearts the mystery.**

**5 Therefore we, before him bending,
this great sacrament revere:
types and shadows have their ending,
for the newer rite is here;
faith, our outward sense befriending,
makes our inward vision clear.**

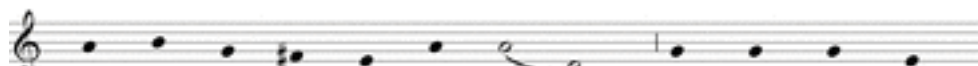
**6 Glory let us give and blessing
to the Father and the Son,
honour, might, and praise addressing,
while eternal ages run;
ever too his love confessing,
who, from both, with both is One. Amen.**




1 Now, my tongue, the mys - ter - y tell - ing of the glo - rious
 2 Given for us, and con - de - scend - ing to be born for
 3 That last night in sup - per he took mid the twelve, his
 4 Word made flesh, the bread he tak - eth, by his word his
 *5 There - fore we, be - fore him bend - ing, this great Sac - ra -
 *6 Glo - ry let us give and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



1 Bo - dy sing, and the Blood, all price ex - cell - ing,
 2 us be - low, he with us in con - verse blend - ing
 3 cho - sen hand, Je - sus, with the Law com - ply - ing,
 4 Flesh to be; wine his sa - cred Blood he mak - eth,
 5 ment re - vere; types and sha - dows have their end - ing,
 6 and the Son, hon - or, thanks, and praise ad - dress - ing,



1 which the Gen - tiles' Lord and King, once on earth a -
 2 dwelt, the seed of truth to sow, till he closed with
 3 keeps the feast its rites de - mand; then, more pre - cious
 4 though the sens - es fail to see; faith a - lone the
 5 for the new - er rite is here; faith, our out - ward
 6 while e - ter - nal a - ges run; ev - er too his



1 mong us dwell - ing, shed for this world's ran - som - ing,
 2 won - drous end - ing his most pa - tient life of woe,
 3 food sup - ply - ing, gives him - self with his own hand,
 4 true heart wak - eth to be - hold the mys - ter - y,
 5 sense be - friend - ing, makes our in - ward vi - sion clear,
 6 love con - fess - ing who from both with both is One.

Words: Alt. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274); ver. Hymnal 1940, rev. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *Pange lingua*, plain-song, Mode 3, *Zionstempel Hymnen*, 14th cent.; acc. Jackson Hill (b. 1941) Copyright ©1984, Jackson Hill. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Post Communion Prayer

O Lord and heavenly Father, we your humble servants ask you mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching you to grant, that by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all your whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. **Amen.**

The Peace and Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**