

Strasbourg Liturgy (1539)¹

Public Confession of Sins

Make confession to God the Lord, and let everyone acknowledge with me his sin and iniquity:

Almighty, eternal God and Father, we confess and acknowledge unto You that we were conceived in unrighteousness and are full of sin and transgression in all our life. We do not fully believe Your Word nor follow Your holy commandments. Remember Your goodness, we beseech You, and for Your Name's sake be gracious unto us, and forgive us our iniquity which, alas, is great Amen.

Public Absolution of Sins

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1 Tim. 1:15)

Let everyone, with St. Paul, truly acknowledge this in his heart and believe in Christ. Thus, in His name, I proclaim unto you the forgiveness of all your sins, and declare you to be loosed of them on earth, that you be loosed of them also in heaven, in eternity. Amen.

Psalm/Hymn

Prayer for Illumination

The Lord be with you. Let us pray:

Almighty, gracious Father, forasmuch as our whole salvation depends upon our true understanding of Your holy Word, grant to all of us that our hearts, being freed from worldly affairs, may hear and apprehend Your holy Word with all diligence and faith, that we may rightly understand Your gracious will, cherish it, and live by it with all earnestness, to Your praise and honor; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm/Hymn

¹ From Baird Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 167-181.

Scripture Lesson

Sermon

Singing of the Apostles' Creed

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord be with you. Let us pray:

Almighty, merciful God and Father, You who has promised us through Your Son that whatsoever we ask of You in His name You will grant unto us, and has commanded us through Your Spirit to pray for those in authority and for all men: We do heartily beseech You through Jesus Christ, Your most-beloved Son our Savior, to enlighten with the knowledge of Your Gospel the hearts of our lord Emperor and King, all princes and nobles, and the magistrates and ruling body of this city, that they and all those in power may acknowledge You as their sovereign and true Lord, serve You with fear and trembling, and rule over us, who are the work of Your hand and the sheep of Your pasture, according to Your will and good pleasure.

Grant that all men everywhere may come to the knowledge of the truth. Especially to this congregation, being assembled in Your name, send forth Your Holy Spirit, the Master and Teacher, who may write Your law upon our hearts, take away our blindness, and lead us to recognize our sin, which otherwise, alas, is death, and its baseness and shame is concealed. Make it vivid to us, O Lord, and enlighten our eyes that we may see the truth and recognize indeed that there is nothing in us except mere sin, death, hell and the deserved wrath of God. So, may we hunger and thirst after the rich well-spring of Your goodness and grace, and gratefully accept the same which You have delivered to us through Your only-begotten Son, who, having become like unto men and us poor sinners, suffered and died and rose from the dead, in order that He may save us from sin, death, and hell, and bring us to the resurrection and our inheritance of the Kingdom of God.

And grant us, O Lord and Father, that with true faith we may keep this Supper of Your dear Son, our Lord Jesus, as He has ordained it, so that we truly receive and enjoy the true communion of His body and blood, of our Savior Himself, who is the only saving bread of heaven. In this holy sacrament, He wishes to offer and give Himself so that He may live in

us, and we in Him, being members of His body and serving You fruitfully in every way to the common edification of Your Church, being set free from every passion of our evil, corrupted flesh, from all anger, vexation, envy, hatred, selfishness, lewdness, unchastity, and what more there may be of the damned work of the flesh: to the end that, by all means, we as Your obedient children may ever lift up our hearts and souls unto You in true childlike trust, and always call upon You, saying as our only Master and Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, has taught us:

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Instruction on the Holy Supper

The first: that, since the Lord now wishes to communicate His body and blood to us, we should reflect upon the fact that our body and blood – which means, our whole nature – are corrupted to all evil and thus to eternal death, so that they of themselves may nevermore share in the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15).

The second: that to deliver us from such corruption, the eternal Word of God became flesh, so that there might be a holy flesh and blood: this is to say, a truly divine man, through whom the flesh and blood of us all would be restored and sanctified. And this happens as we truly eat and drink of His body and blood.

The third: that the Lord truly offers and gives His holy and sanctifying body and blood to us in the Holy Supper, with the visible things of bread and wine, through the ministry of the Church, as His holy Word declares: “Take and eat, this is My body which is given for you; drink all of it, this is My blood which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sin.” And we must accept this Word of the Lord with simple faith, and doubt not that He, the Lord Himself, is in the midst of us through the external ministry of the Church which He Himself has ordained for that purpose. Such does He proclaim to us with His own words: that the bread which we break may truly be, even for us, the communion of His body, and the cup with which we give thanks, the communion of His blood (1 Cor. 10). But we must always diligently consider why the Lord thus imparts to us His holy, sanctifying communion in the

holy sacrament: namely, that He may ever more live in us, and that we may be one body in Him, our Head, even as we all partake here of one bread (1 Cor. 10).

The fourth: that in this action, we keep the Lord's memorial and feast with true devotion and thankfulness, so that we always laud and praise Him in all our words and deeds, yea with our whole life, for all His benefits: for His Incarnation and bitter death whereby He has paid for our sin; for this blessed communion of His body and blood; that is, for Himself entire, who is true God and man, through whom alone we obtain the true and blessed life both here and in eternity.

The Words of Institution

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "this cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (1 Cor. 11:23-25)

Believe in the Lord, and give eternal praise and thanks unto Him!

Distribution of the Elements

Remember, believe and proclaim that Christ the Lord has died for you.

Psalm/Hymn

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. Let us pray:

Grant unto us, O heavenly Father, that the remembrance of our redemption may never leave our hearts, but that we may walk in Christ, the Light of the world, far removed from our foolish reason and blind wills, which are vain and injurious darkness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, heavenly Father, we give You eternal praise and thanks that You have been so gracious unto us poor sinners, having drawn us to Your Son our Lord Jesus, whom You have delivered to death for us and given to be our nourishment and our dwelling unto eternal life. Grant that we may never relinquish these things from our hearts, but ever grow

and increase in faith to You, which, through love, is effective of all good works. And so may our whole life be devoted to Your praise and the edification of our neighbor; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Benediction

The LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance, and give you peace. Amen. (Num. 6:24-26)

Committal

Depart! The Spirit of the Lord go with you unto eternal life! Amen.