

Prayers of the Eucharist

Early and Reformed

R. C. D. Jasper
and
G. J. Cuming



Fourth Edition

Edited by Paul F. Bradshaw & Maxwell E. Johnson

“For decades, Jasper and Cuming’s *Prayers of the Eucharist* has given a wide audience access to the treasures of liturgical tradition. By integrating recently discovered texts, rearranging the material, and thoroughly updating introductions and commentary, Paul Bradshaw and Maxwell Johnson ensure that this standard work remains a reliable guide not only to the sources, but also to current scholarship.”

—Harald Buchinger
University of Regensburg, Germany

“Bradshaw and Johnson have produced an edition of the classic *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed* that every contemporary textual scholar must have. Coming nearly thirty years after the last edition, this new revision reflects the substantial amount of critical work that has been completed since then. The restructuring of the work—placing the prayers in textual ‘families’—allows the scholar to see more clearly the relationships between and within various eucharistic prayer traditions. In updating this text, Bradshaw and Johnson have drawn not only on their own extensive research in this area but have also mined the depth of other recent scholarship to demonstrate the complexity of current debates (including the work of McGowan, Rouwhorst, Stewart-Sykes, Gelston, Spinks, and Winkler, to name just a few). The revisions in both commentary and text reflect the multiplicity of forms in eucharistic praying in the early church and invite the student of liturgy to enter more deeply into the texts themselves.”

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Prayers of the Eucharist

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Texts translated and edited with introductions

originally by
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Fourth Edition by
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PREFACE

The object of this collection of eucharistic prayers is to introduce readers with little or no knowledge of Greek or Latin or modern languages other than English into the treasure house of the church's worship. Each previous edition of this now long-established work has added more prayers to the collection, and this edition is no exception, with numerous additions including representative texts from several Eastern traditions. But a much more significant difference from all the earlier versions is the arrangement of the texts. Previously, they were placed largely in chronological order according to the dates when each was believed to have been composed, in the case of the early ones, and to the known dates of the composition of each of the reformed prayers. In this new edition, they have instead been gathered into groups that reflect their particular "family"—shared characteristics, verbal relationships, and/or ecclesial and cultural roots. This, it is hoped, will enable readers to recognize more easily the relationships between the prayers in each group and their difference in style and theology from those in the other groupings.

For the most part, the translations from the earlier editions have been retained, albeit often revised, but in a number of instances new translations have been substituted: where no indication is given of the source, they are either our own work or adapted versions of those previously appearing. In some cases, only minor adjustments to the introduction of the texts have been called for; in others, major rewriting has been necessary because of significant advances in scholarship since the last edition and different conclusions that have now become accepted. The bibliographies have once again been brought up to date; as before, they are primarily intended for English-speaking students who are beginning the serious study of liturgy, rather than for experienced scholars. Generally, the head of each list indicates where the original source

of the text or texts may be found and, in the case of translated texts, where more complete English versions can be accessed. These are then followed by a small selection of secondary works that gives preference to easily available recent studies in English where possible, and only includes books and articles in other languages where no satisfactory English equivalent exists.

The following works are frequently referenced in the bibliographies by the short form of their title or by the last name of the author(s) and short title:

Coena Domini 1. Die Abendmahlsliturgie der Reformationskirchen im 16/17 Jahrhundert, ed. Irmgard Pahl, Spicilegium Friburgense 29 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1983).

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Bryan D. Spinks, *Do This in Remembrance of Me: The Eucharist from the Early Church to the Present Day* (London: SCM, 2013).

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PAUL F. BRADSHAW
MAXWELL E. JOHNSON

A GLOSSARY OF SOME COMMON TECHNICAL TERMS

anamnesis: the Greek word for “remembrance,” as in “Do this in remembrance of me.” It can be used in a general sense of the part of a prayer in which the mighty works of God are recalled, but is used in a more specific sense of a section of a eucharistic prayer in which Jesus’ death (and usually also his resurrection) are remembered. In those prayers where it occurs, it generally follows the institution narrative.

anaphora: a Greek word meaning “offering.” It is used in the Christian East to designate the eucharistic prayer, the whole service being called “the Liturgy,” derived from another Greek word that anciently meant a work done for the public benefit (and not, as is often mistakenly said, a work done by the people).

canon: meaning “rule” in Latin. This is the name given to the eucharistic prayer in the Roman tradition, while the whole service is called “the Mass.”

doxology: the conclusion of a prayer that expresses praise to God.

embolism: a short insertion into a longer prayer.

epiclesis: a Greek word meaning “invocation.” It can be used in a more general sense of any petition calling upon God, but like anamnesis it has a more specific technical sense, referring to the part or parts of a eucharistic prayer that invoke Christ—or more commonly the Holy Spirit—on the eucharistic elements or on the people, or on both.

institution narrative: an account of the Last Supper, when it is believed that Jesus instituted the Eucharist, created from one or

more of the New Testament narratives of that event, and usually—but not always—located in the heart of the eucharistic prayer.

preface: in spite of the normal meaning of the English word, this term is derived from the Latin *praefatio*, meaning proclamation and not introduction, and refers to the main section of the eucharistic prayer in which God is praised for his mighty acts. The expression “proper preface” designates a variable form of the preface used at a particular festival or liturgical season.

Sanctus: the Latin word for “holy.” It is used to denote the hymn beginning “Holy, holy, holy,” based on Isaiah 6:3, which has its roots in the Jewish prayer *Yotser* and had begun to be taken over into Christian usage by the fourth century, if not sooner. It usually forms the conclusion to the final part of the preface that refers to the worshippers joining with the angels in singing this hymn. In some traditions *Benedictus qui venit*, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matt 21:9), is appended to the Sanctus.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Alcuin Club Collections
<i>Addai and Mari</i>	The Liturgy of the Apostles Addai and Mari
<i>Basil</i>	The Liturgy of St. Basil
BCE	Before the Common Era
ByzBAS	The Byzantine Liturgy of St. Basil
CE	The Common Era
<i>Chrysostom</i>	The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
<i>Cyril</i>	The Coptic version of the Liturgy of St. Mark
EgBAS	The Egyptian Anaphora of St. Basil
ET	English translation
<i>James</i>	The Liturgy of St. James
JLS	Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study
LEW	F. E. Brightman, <i>Liturgies Eastern and Western</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896)
<i>Mar Theodore</i>	The Anaphora of Mar Theodore the Interpreter
<i>Mark</i>	The Liturgy of St. Mark
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale)
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>

OUP	Oxford University Press
SC	Sources chrétiennes
<i>Sharar</i>	The Third Anaphora of St. Peter
<i>Twelve Apostles</i>	The Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles

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PART ONE

EARLY PRAYERS OF THE EUCHARIST

INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY OF EARLY LITURGIES

Why are the early liturgies worth studying? Two good reasons spring to mind. First, the early liturgies, whether in the form of texts for use or as described by the fathers, give us a picture of Christian worship in a simpler form before later additions and complications to the rites make it difficult for us to discern what is at their heart. This reason would be sufficient in itself, but it has been reinforced by the fact that virtually all revisions of the Eucharist in the last fifty years or more have been strongly influenced by the early liturgies, and a knowledge of the latter enriches our appreciation of contemporary services.

But first, it is important to understand the complex factors that must be taken into account in the presentation of a text to the modern reader. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a specific early liturgy. Definitive texts only came into existence with the invention of printing, and by then many early liturgies had gone out of use. Until then, one can speak of any particular liturgy only in terms of the surviving manuscripts of that liturgy: for example, Vatican MS gr. 2281 of the Liturgy of St. Mark, which is by no means identical with Vatican MS gr. 1970 of the same liturgy. There are only three complete manuscripts of *Mark*, but there are twenty or thirty of *James*, and about 1,800 of *Chrysostom*, of which 249 are of interest to specialists. Even manuscripts of approximately the same date may differ widely in content, though the later manuscripts became increasingly stereotyped. Liturgical manuscripts were normally written for use in services that may reflect the local usage of a church or monastery. Some of the most important manuscripts were written in southern Italy, whither numbers of monks had fled before the advance of the Arabs; their content is very different from those that preserve the use of Constantinople.

Very few manuscripts bear the date of writing; Vatican 2281 (mentioned above) is an exception, being dated AD 1209. The hand-writing can usually be dated within a hundred years either way; and sometimes an indication is given by the mention of a patriarch in the intercessions. The great majority of manuscripts date from a period after AD 800, unlike those of the New Testament, some of which go back to c. 400. Thus there may be a gap of centuries between composition and copying. A very important exception is the ever-increasing corpus of liturgical papyri preserved in the sands of Egypt, some of which were probably written as early as the fourth century. There are also one or two Latin sacramentaries that were written in the sixth or seventh centuries.

It is important to distinguish between the date of writing of a manuscript and the date of its contents. For instance, the Prayers of Sarapion survive only in one manuscript written in the eleventh century; yet they were composed in the fourth century. It is unlikely that these prayers have been altered in the meantime, but in some cases it is possible to trace a steady development over seven or eight hundred years.

Besides Greek and Latin, liturgies are extant in Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, and Old Slavonic. Especial value attaches to those that were translated from the Greek, since the translations were mostly made some centuries before the oldest surviving Greek manuscript. They thus bear witness to an early state of the text and have usually undergone less alteration and expansion than the Greek.

There is one other important source of information about the liturgies, namely catecheses. These were addresses given by a bishop to a group of baptismal candidates. Those of Ambrose, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Theodore of Mopsuestia all give us facts about the celebration of the Eucharist and often quotations from the text. This is true also of the sermons of John Chrysostom (not to be confused with the liturgy named after him) and Augustine. These fathers often refer explicitly to what their hearers have just seen or heard. All these sources belong to the second half of the fourth century and the early fifth, so that we have a fairly complete picture of the

order of service in such places as Antioch, Carthage, Jerusalem, and Milan at a date much earlier than that of most liturgical manuscripts. Unfortunately, none of these fathers deals in full detail with the text of the eucharistic prayer, which was probably regarded as a subject to be treated with some reserve.

The attribution of a liturgy to one or all of the apostles would not be accepted as historically reliable nowadays, though it was an understood convention in the early centuries. However, the liturgy in Book 8 of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, sometimes called the “Clementine Liturgy,” was highly regarded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the attribution, and despite growing doubts of its authenticity. Arguments continue about the authorship of liturgies attributed to other early Christian figures, such as St. Basil. These attributions need to be treated with caution, though it is by no means impossible that in some cases the person concerned may have contributed a part of the liturgy that bears his name.

It is clear that those presiding at the Eucharist in the earliest days were free to decide how to word their eucharistic prayers, although doubtless they were guided by the conventions and traditions of their own local community. By the late fourth century, however, concern for orthodoxy, among other factors, led to a greater standardization of texts and to elements being copied from one source to another. Finally, in 535 the emperor Justinian insisted that no one should be consecrated as bishop until he could repeat the prayer by heart, which implies the existence of an accepted text for the candidates to learn. On the other hand, that by no means marked the end of the process of development and accretions to the various prayers, which continued for centuries afterward.

Until fairly recently, scholars would attempt to trace all extant eucharistic prayers back to one original, but for the last fifty years or more the evidence has been growing that on the contrary an original variety of styles and forms of prayer was gradually reduced to a rather greater uniformity, with the emergence of particular “families” of rites closely associated with the major centers of Christianity: Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem,

and Rome, each with its own distinctive structure and style of eucharistic prayer. But there was considerable interchange of content and, in the rest of the liturgy, borrowing of complete texts.

Those who compare this new edition of the book with its predecessor will observe a large number of changes in this first part on early liturgies. This is a sign of just how much historical research conducted during the last thirty years has changed our picture of the distant past. It has come about not so much through the discovery of new texts but through a re-evaluation of the existing sources, discerning more clearly the literary relationships that exist between a number of them, recognizing the greater importance of some and the lesser significance of others in charting the evolution of eucharistic prayers, identifying different layers of development within them, and above all acknowledging the diversity of early practices rather than searching for a commonality of structure.

Several texts have been added to the collection, occasionally a recent discovery, like the Barcelona papyrus, but more often well-known sources are included to fill in some gaps and provide a more complete picture of the diversity of Christian practice. Correspondingly, a few former texts have been omitted, as being of less central significance to the historical narrative, and others supplied with new translations. Unlike the previous editions, where all the material was arranged in what was thought to be the chronological order of its composition, we have grouped the individual texts within their various liturgical families so that it will be easier to see their relationships to one other and thus gain a better understanding of them.

1. JEWISH SOURCES

The scholarly consensus that emerged during the course of the twentieth century was that Christian eucharistic prayers had developed out of the Jewish grace after meals, the *Birkat ha-mazon*, the oldest extant text of which dates only from the tenth century. This was in spite of the fact that a growing number of Jewish scholars began to express doubts as to whether prayers like this would have existed in the first century in the fixed form in which they are later found, and also despite the fact that in Jewish tradition that particular prayer came to mark the point in the meal after which no further food could be consumed, although wine might still be drunk. This is not to say that something like it did not exist in earlier centuries. Indeed, there are apparent references in Jubilees 22:6-9 and Mishnah *Ber* 6.8 to a tripartite grace that seems to have resembled to some degree the later form. But today most scholars would deny (1) that its text was already fixed when Christianity emerged, (2) that it was the only form in use by Jews at the time, and (3) that it was the sole source of later Christian eucharistic prayers.

Even what became the classic *berakah* structure of all Jewish prayer, "Blessed are you . . .," does not seem to have begun to achieve normative status until at least two centuries after the birth of Christianity and alternative types of prayer, including thanksgivings, were common, especially among the sectarian community at Qumran, from whom the Dead Sea Scrolls derive. Nor should we treat the codification of prayer in the third-century Mishnah as always reflecting what had been much older established traditions rather than as attempting to impose new norms on earlier diverse practices. In any case, even some alternative forms and practices were still permitted for different situations. It is even possible that later rabbinic Judaism's adoption of the normative status of

the *berakah* was a deliberate reaction to Christianity's existing preference for the thanksgiving form.

As well as the traditions that eventually gave rise to the *Birkat ha-mazon*, therefore, we have included some evidence for other Jewish forms of prayer at meals and also descriptions of the meal practices from the Community Rule of Qumran, of the Essenes (who are usually identified with the Qumran community) by the Jewish historian Josephus (c. 37–100 CE), and of the Therapeutae, an ascetic Jewish community residing beside Lake Mareotis in Egypt, by Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 BCE–c. 50 CE) in his *De vita contemplativa*. Although the last of these is probably greatly idealized, even if not completely fictional, it may not be very unlike what also took place within some early Christian groups. Some of the sources indicate the existence of prayer before the meal, others after, others both before and after. Examples of such prayers are so few in number because they were usually preserved orally rather than written down, something that contributed to the fluidity of the text.

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JUBILEES

[written c. 170–150 BCE; ET from James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 511 (Louvain: Peeters, 1989), 128–29.]

A companion to Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed The Churches of the East possess a sometimes bewildering array of prayers. With the purchase of Kobo VIP Membership, you're getting 10% off and 2x Kobo Super Points on eligible items. Your Shopping Cart is empty. There are currently no items in your Shopping Cart. Get 1 credit every month to exchange for an audiobook of your choice. *No commitment, cancel anytime. Remove.

The Eucharist is a Christian rite that is considered a sacrament in most churches, and as an ordinance in others. According to the New Testament, the rite was instituted by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper; giving his disciples bread and wine during a Passover meal, Jesus commanded his followers to "do this in memory of me" while referring to the bread as "my body" and the cup of wine as "the new covenant in my blood". Through the Eucharistic celebration Christians remember both Christ's sacrifice

Introduction Writing The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Edward Gibbon singled out the practice of intercessory prayer to explain monastic corruption: [Monks] kindly imparted the merits of their prayers and penance [sic] to a rich and liberal sinner. A century later, the Comte Charles Forbes René de Montalembert fought back with a truly glorious description of that very activity which Gibbon had so disparaged: The first of all the services which the monks have conferred upon Christian society was that of praying—of praying much, of praying always for those whose prayers were evil or who prayed not at all.

