

The Grail Liturgies

*An Alternative Form for
the Eucharist*
and
Morning and Evening Prayer

With a foreword by The Rt Revd John Pritchard

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Front cover: The Holy Machhapuchhre (Fish Tail) Mountain,
Himalaya, Nepal

Preface: The Grail Liturgies

The Grail Liturgies provide a bridge between traditional church worship and our situation today. They communicate a spirituality which is fresh, vibrant and inclusive, and in a sense, 'cosmic'. They provide an expression for our spiritual journeys in a way that seeks to unite people from different backgrounds, traditions and experiences. They have Christian roots. They honour all religions, seeking to connect with the essential truth at the heart of the different faith traditions. They celebrate unity and respect diversity, recognising the interconnectiveness and interdependence of all things. They are the celebration of life and the relationships that make life.

The survival of the Church – any church – depends upon connecting with where people are, connecting with the world around us, and connecting with the Supreme Reality for which the church exists. Traditional church worship connected with people of previous generations, but clearly does not connect with the majority of people today. This compilation required hard questions. I did not want it to appear like yet another prayer book revision of the Church or yet another New Age alternative.

It is clear that, for many people today, words like the Holy Communion, Mass or the Liturgy have lost much of their power and meaning, also Morning and Evening Prayer. Nevertheless these are treasures which represent the heart of Christian practice and devotion. So we need to rediscover a way by which these words can point and direct us to what the essence of spirituality and faith are about. We need to find a way by which our religious and cultural traditions can liberate us, inspire us and carry us forward. Liturgy is the essential expression of the Church, and we must seek to re-discover the Eucharist / Holy Communion / Mass and prayer for the morning and evening of the day in a meaningful and relevant way for our time.

New forms of prayer and liturgy don't just happen. They evolve from a longing in the heart. They evolve through being shaped and tested by the experiences and insights of those who use them. They evolve through their ability to adapt to our own situation, culture and needs. They evolve through a theological and philosophical consistency appropriate to our time. What is offered here is a researched contribution to this process. May it provide a focus for our spiritual concerns and practices, and offer possibilities for the Church of the future.

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Foreword

By the Rt Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford

The spiritual journeys we take in these exciting and bewildering days are as varied as our personalities are mysterious. Some people find sustenance in a slowly evolving tradition. Others long for wider horizons and new angles. These liturgies are written for the latter. They are full of fresh images and a wide range of symbols. They appeal to the senses and to the ancient riches of natural theology. Above all, they aim for inclusiveness by taking up the cosmic themes we find in the New Testament letters to the Ephesians and Colossians.

Here are liturgies which push the boundaries and which will hopefully engage the minds and hearts of many who find traditional liturgy operating in too narrow a framework. Jonathan Robinson has loved and laboured over these worship materials for many years. They have been tried and tested and enjoyed. They have carried the weight of people's sacred expectations and hopes. Now in revised and refreshed form they are offered with love for the world, a love charged with a sense of sacred presence and a sense of sacred time.

Eucharistic Liturgy for Today

The word *liturgy* broadly refers to the ‘work’ of spiritual practices which follow an agreed text and form (allowing for flexibility), and which are shared. In the Christian tradition it historically refers to the centre and focus of Christian practice in the work of the Eucharist, the Holy Communion or the Mass. However it can also refer to such other practices as lend themselves to a liturgical model, as here in Morning and Evening Prayer.

Good liturgy needs to be built on sound foundations and expressed in a suitable paradigm for our time. These liturgies attempt to be both traditional and contemporary, building on our roots and responding to the spiritual needs, opportunities and challenges of today. They provide a resource which can be regularly and selectively used. They can accommodate any lectionary of prayers and readings, and do not come from any particular denominational background. They are catholic in the sense that they celebrate the unity we all share, whilst also respecting our diversity. They are radical in the sense that they recognise that Church reforms of recent years have failed to address so many of the real issues which concern people today.

In essence they are the celebration of love, which is our best expression of the Divine reality. For those who call themselves Christians, they specifically see this love in Jesus, the Christ. Whatever label or non-label we may attach to ourselves, this call to love is the call to us all, that the Divine life may shine through us. The world is illumined by all who follow this way. They are the true servants of God. They are the Christ figures of our time, and through them we are given signposts to the Kingdom of Heaven.

These liturgies seek to respect the traditions which are precious to different people. Truth can be expressed in many ways. All expressions, properly understood, will lead us to the One Truth. All words should point us to the Word which is unspoken, yet known in the heart. All multiplicity is expression of the One Unity. All our human loves are, to a degree, reflections of Divine Love. All of us are brothers and sisters of one another in the one family of humankind. This is a truth of huge spiritual, social and political consequences, mirroring our common life in the Eternal Godhead.

To assist ‘flow’ and understanding, the Eucharistic liturgy is divided into appropriate parts. These liturgies are contemplative, giving opportunity for space, reflection and stillness. They are universal because they are for all people. In the global village of today there is no place for exclusiveness, and the gifts of God are free. These easy-to-use liturgies aim to lead us ‘into God’, and bring us the spiritual inspiration, strength, nourishment and new life we so much need in these confusing times.

Introduction: The Grail Eucharistic Liturgy

We are familiar with the challenges of producing good liturgy that connects with our situation today. We are also familiar with the challenges facing churches in an increasingly secular society, where declining attraction and influence are recurring themes. Whatever the reasons for this, the effects are far-reaching. History shows that no society has survived for long without a spiritual foundation. So where are we going? Have people rejected the essence of Christianity, the essence shown in the person and teaching of Jesus, or have they rejected the interpretation of Christianity which has come to us?

As we progress in the new millennium many people feel that our modern secular idealogy offers little hope, and ultimately only despair. Mother Teresa rightly observed that spiritual poverty results in great suffering. We know that there is a search, a deep search, perhaps more than ever before, for what can be broadly described as authentic spirituality, for a quality of life beyond the shallowness of materialistic living, for what is 'real', for what makes sense in the world in which we live our lives today. We also know that in recent years, parallel with the decline in church attendance, there has been an *increase* in the number of people claiming to have spiritual/religious experiences. So will this new millennium bring a new springtime, or disintegration? New freedom and opportunity, or emptiness and despair? If the Church is to remain faithful and relevant, it must discover its spirituality, vocation and ministry in today's world. It must combine inherited wisdom with new understanding. There is no alternative.

Good liturgy is like good music, where we are both players and the instruments that are played upon. It can welcome and uplift us. It can inspire and absorb us, and maybe disturb us. It can speak with power and with tenderness, and mysteriously allow new things to happen for us. It can touch us at the deepest levels of our being. It can enlarge our vision, to show us what is joyful, beautiful and good. It can raise us to heaven, to a vision and experience of unity and completeness, and offer us glimpses of home-coming. It can equip us for the world with new commitment and love. In short, good liturgy should produce good energy, which is also spiritual energy and creative energy.

We live in a time of momentous change, of consciousness no less than outward circumstance. The contours of what is important and the symbols that communicate inner realities are themselves constantly

changing. We look for new forms of spiritual expression, as we look for new patterns in sand washed by the ebb and flow of the sea, or in the movement of clouds in the sky. Today we have a real fear that new forms will not come, that we will spiritually die, and the earth disintegrate.

Nothing remains still. That much is certain, and certain also it is that we live in times of opportunity and danger which could never have been foreseen a generation ago. The spiritual challenge to bring hope, meaning and value to our lives is urgent and of enormous practical consequence. We need ways to help us in our spiritual growth. We need ways to help us believe in who we really are. We need ways that are able to heal our fragile and fragmented world, that are able to heal the hurts and divisions that afflict both us and all life on planet Earth. We need ways to build community, understanding, peace, co-operation and sound faith.

In our society today it is clearly more difficult for many of us to find faith and security in traditional religious language. Indeed, we may sometimes suspect that some of those who claim certainty of faith, maybe through a naive understanding of religious texts, are people whose spiritual maturity has yet to develop. *Whoever would save his life*, (claim to know all the answers) *will lose it* are wise words. (Luke 9: 24 RSV translation)

Yet there is a faith and security which is God-given, and surely it is good to seek a language and expression of spiritual practice that helps us discover, learn and practice the gospel that we need to hear today, the gospel that gives meaning to our existence, guidance for our living, help in our need and concern for the world in which we live.

How urgently we need to recover a sense of wonder, of the sacred, of the mystical. How urgently we need to pause and reflect, that we may come to know that we are linked with that One Reality which transcends and survives all else, including death; that reality which is good and kind, that reality which is known in the heart but which can never be adequately defined, and which perhaps we can best describe as 'Love'. Only thus can we begin to discover the fullness of our relationships with one another, with all life and with God. In Christian language, this is to know Christ.

This liturgy is the result of a long journey. It has been well tested in the refining fire of use with many people, and I acknowledge with gratitude the many contributors. There are no 'final solutions', and we must continue striving. It aims to be as direct and clear as possible, using language that seeks to have strength and meaning and sometimes allows itself a touch of poetry. It aims to speak to us in the situation and condition

of our time, hopefully in a way which will not cause offense. It aims to speak to the faithful of the Churches and also to those who may not be inspired by the structures but who look in hope for spiritual bread.

The language of liturgy must be good language, as comprehensive, balanced and economical as possible, language that helps us discover the living presence of God, in celebration and in need, in light and in darkness, in joy and in suffering, in death and in resurrection, and often in surprises. Also good liturgy needs to be interactive, enabling all to truly feel involved, 'part of the one body'.

Whoever will let himself be lost for my sake, (for the sake of truth, compassion and justice, for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven), will find his true self complements the quotation above (Matthew 16: 25 – NEB translation). It is not easy to let go so that the mystery may happen. But let go we must, and the Church must, whether it be of clinging to material forms or clinging to our own outworn habits, concepts, prejudices and securities. This is the way of faith. Only thus can we discover the greater security of our True Self, and that One Reality, (for the two are ultimately the same), which continues to shine in undimmed splendour when all that is changing has come to its end.

These are important issues. If we find a way forward for our time that can inspire and renew us, then the possibilities for growth and transformation, for us as individuals, for society and for the human race, are endless. If we fail to find a way of spiritual progress and regeneration, then it is time, in evolutionary terms, to let go, and make way for others.

The pluralistic nature of our society today surely requires that good liturgy is conscious of the various and significant spiritualities of our time. I refer especially to Creation Spirituality, Celtic Spirituality, Green Spirituality and Feminist Spirituality, where awareness of the goodness, beauty and purpose of life and our relationship with the natural world and all creation are urgent and enduring themes.

The perception of the Church as an authoritarian, hierarchical, patriarchal and moralistic institution is a problem for many people. I have attempted to remove gender wherever possible. The masculine, rational, left brain presentation of the Deity is a real stumbling block for many, and has a psychological imagery which is far from complete. We need the balance that allows for feeling, intuition and experience. The aspirations of liberation theology must also be addressed, as in this divided world we strive to give back to those who are powerless and dispossessed a sense of dignity and meaning, and challenge the economic and social structures

and expectations which make things the blasphemy that they are.

This Liturgy celebrates interdependence, and moves away from the image and language of God 'out there', separate from his creation, that image of an almighty and capricious being that causes so many problems and confusions. God is in all. We celebrate the essential 'oneness' of all life which transcends our apparent separation, isolation and mortality. Jesus prays *that they may all be one.* (John 17: 21) We discover this oneness, spiritually, as we come to know Christ, as we move from the enclosed and restricted self or ego consciousness to the Eternal Self or Divine Consciousness. *Dwell in me, as I in you.* (John 15: 4) This is our hope, and when the balance has moved so much in the direction of the individual it is also the opportunity to move from illusion, suffering and bewilderment to truth, freedom and ecstasy. *It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me,* St. Paul exclaims joyfully. (Galatians 2: 20) Indeed, the fullest vision is that ultimately there is nothing but God. It is only our way of seeing things that distorts life.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the insights of many traditions. The time has come when we can better go forward by being open to the spiritual wisdom and treasures of other Faiths, for it is only thus that we can be true to the essence of our own tradition. We cannot afford any longer to focus on one corner of the globe and imagine that our little world is the whole reality and that our way is the superior way or the only way. This is hypocrisy. Jesus constantly challenged his followers to go beyond their traditional and comfortable ways of seeing life, and I believe that challenge is no less important today.

It seems to me that much of recent liturgical revision has simply 'moved the furniture around', without adequate research into what communicates spiritual reality in our time, what people are looking for and what reforms are really necessary. We have attempted to make things contemporary and 'simple', yet somehow failed to make impact, and communicate that true simplicity and depth of the Spirit which convinces. So although this liturgy will probably be regarded as 'contemporary', I have by no means always used modern language and customs. Indeed, I have sometimes preferred more ancient wording or practice where these seem to enhance the worship and meaning, and I have tried to connect with existing church liturgies as appropriate. I hope it will be used with flexibility, and with discernment according to circumstances. The expression of spiritual truth, depth and mystery is something very special. It requires its own special language, a language which is rooted in the Spirit, is in tune with where people are today, and which respects and

safeguards the spiritual wisdom and treasures which we inherit. I believe those who use this liturgy will find it a valuable spiritual companion.

As regards the text, I will let this speak for itself, except to make the following points:

The liturgy is divided into appropriate sections, for convenience and ease of understanding; also to give a sense of structure and 'flow'. These sections follow a broadly traditional form, with the addition of a section for 'Symbols of Presence', and also a section for Meditation.

It begins with the Preparation, to prepare and focus us, and includes the blessing of the elements to be used in the celebration. This is followed (if appropriate) with the *Kyrie Eleison* ("Lord have mercy..."). Symbols, like words, can speak powerfully to us, and sometimes more powerfully than words. The natural symbols of earth, air, fire and water are universal symbols of creation. I have also chosen the cross, because the cross is both the particular symbol of Christianity and also symbolises the universal human experience of suffering and love, death and resurrection. The use of these symbols encourages a greater use of our bodies than traditional liturgical forms.

From here we move to the Reconciliation, traditionally the Confession, where we seek reconciliation in whatever divides us from God, from each other and from the world. True reconciliation requires repentance, or a 'new heart', and is followed by the Absolution, where we are assured of the Divine forgiveness, acceptance and healing.

I have heard so many people ask for more quiet and fewer words, so I include opportunity for Meditation. This can of course be conducted in whatever way is appropriate. It is placed here to help us to be open to the Divine Word and to attune us to the Divine Presence.

The Ministry of the Word allows us to hear and reflect on the Divine Word and its significance for us. Space is given for a message or activity.

Then follows the opportunity for our response. It seems to me that any attempt to modify the traditional Creeds will be incomplete and liable to cause offense. Evidence indicates that more than 50% of people claiming to be followers of Christianity feel they are unable to say the Creeds with integrity. The conceptual language of the Creeds is therefore unhelpful and divisive for most of us today. Surely it is the way we live that really matters. So I felt it best simply to recognise and be honest about the problems of language and concepts which are the product of a

particular time and place in history and consciousness. The truth is that we can only genuinely respond to what is real for us in our own lives. This section is therefore called 'The Commitment', and encourages an environmental and planetary awareness and concern appropriate for our time. (Requirements of belief were much simpler in the early Church, and the practice of reciting the Nicene Creed only began in the 5th century).

A minimum of direction is given in the Intercessions. We are encouraged to be partners with God, (an entirely biblical view), rather than to plead for a course of action or result which may simply be our own wish. The latter can too easily degenerate into psychic manipulation.

The Peace celebrates the peace and love of God in which we are invited to share. It is placed here before the offertory in accordance with the tradition of the early Church, as recorded by Justin Martyr. (Second century CE.) This is followed by the Offertory, in which the bread and wine are offered and prepared for consecration, in the context of a larger offering of ourselves and all that we are to the glory of God.

In the Thanksgiving we join with all that is as we give praise to God. We join with the world around us, the world within us and the world beyond us, and we invoke the holy angels of light, to distinguish from the dark forces who, some traditions tell us, can masquerade as angels of light. This culminates in the *Sanctus*, based on Isaiah's vision in the temple. ("Holy, Holy, Holy..." Isaiah 6: 1-6.)

The prayer over the Bread and the Wine is offered in two versions. The first version is a more explicit rendering of the instruction of Jesus to *take bread, break, bless and share in memory of me*, and to receive his blood, his life, in the form of wine. The invocation of the Holy Spirit sanctifies the ordinary things of bread and wine, that they may be for us the Divine Presence, perceived in Christian language as the Body and Blood of Christ. So we celebrate the Eucharist as more than simply a commemoration or memory of a past event. It is the bringing to mind and the celebration of the Divine Reality and Presence with us now. The offering of Jesus is the expression of the Divine Love that is always offered to us, to all people and to all creation, at each and every moment of our lives and to each of our particular situations. This offering also reminds us of the demands of love and the costliness of love.

Then follows the Lord's Prayer and, for the first version, the *Trisagion* ("Holy God..." from Orthodox and Roman liturgies.) The *Trisagion* is of earlier origin than the *Agnus Dei*, occurring in the Acts of the Council of Chacedon in 451 CE.

The alternative prayer over the Bread and Wine offers an alternative expression of the Eucharistic celebration, which may be appropriate in some situations. When Jesus takes bread and says *This is my body...* he shows us that the external world is not separate from the inner world of ourselves; both are part of a larger and more fundamental reality. So we are encouraged to recognise that what Jesus shows as being true for himself is also in this sense true for each of us. When the wine is taken, we celebrate the one life of Christ in each of us, and that our lives are truly found in the one life of Christ 'for the life of us all'. The Eucharistic celebration, therefore, is the celebration of the fundamental unity of all life, whilst also respecting the importance and significance of our diversity and individuality. It takes us beyond seeing ourselves as separate from God, beyond seeing ourselves as separate from others, beyond categories of sacred and secular, subject and object, and all other distinctions that divide. It is a reconciling act. It is the call to move from an attitude of self-interest to common interest, from where we are free to control and exploit the world to a realisation that we have a responsibility to the world, to see that life is about partnership, about love and about self-giving. This is to move from a dualistic to a non-dualistic perception of reality. This is the essence of deep ecology, so essential for our future and our survival, which is given expression here in spiritual substance. This is the celebration of the cosmic vision of interconnectedness, the vision that, ultimately, all is One in the Divine.

A choice of words is suggested, as the Divine Presence is expressed in sacramental form. The Body of Christ may be rendered as 'The Bread of Eternal Life', that nourishes us and unites us. (See e.g. John 6: 48 & 54.) The Blood, or 'Life' of Christ may be rendered as 'The Cup of Eternal Life'. (See e.g. Mark 14: 23 & 24 and John 6: 54.) This expresses the profound truth that our lives are not our exclusive possession, but are rather made complete through the life of the Spirit within us. *It is the spirit that gives life.* (John 6:63.) Opportunity for healing through Laying-on of Hands and Anointing is included.

After receiving the sacrament the liturgy ends with thanksgiving and a giving of ourselves, thus sealing the dynamic interplay between God and humanity, the giving and receiving which is at the heart of every true relationship. The concluding blessing is in a Trinitarian, or relational, tradition, as is the whole celebration.

Jonathan Robinson

The Celebration of the Eucharist



*Note: Flexibility and imagination are encouraged. Due consideration should be given for **what is best for each occasion, what particular contributions can be made, and what should be omitted.***

It may be helpful to read through the introductory notes and the Liturgy text beforehand if you are not familiar with it.

Where a sound is indicated a prayer bell, sounding bowl, gong or other instrument may be used as appropriate.

Posture may be as suggested or as appropriate for the occasion.



The Preparation

Hymns or chants may be sung and music played. The celebrant may offer a welcome, and summarise the intention and theme of the celebration as appropriate.

A period of silence may be observed, beginning and/or ending with a sound.

Celebrant: The Light of the World is here. **Amen.**

Celebrant May the Light of grace and truth,
The Light of peace and love,
The Light of healing and wholeness,
Be with you all:

All And also with you.

Celebrant May the Light of the Spirit fill our lives:

**All Awaken us to fullness of life,
Awaken us to the Divine Life,
Awaken us to who we really are.**

Celebrant May the Light of the Spirit fill our world:

**All Shine from here as a light,
Shine in the dark places,
Shine in our lives.**

The elements to be used in the celebration, having been previously placed in a convenient position, may be blessed with these words:

Celebrant Eternal Light, shining always, radiant sun, illuminating all, true Light, enlightening every person coming into the world, you dispel the darkness of our hearts, and enlighten us with the splendour of your glory: Bless, we pray, all that we bring to this celebration, that through these offerings we may proclaim your Presence and your Power. **Amen.**

Celebrant Bless us also, we pray,
that we may come to this celebration with a clean heart,

All And a right spirit may be within us.

Celebrant Lord, have mercy. *(If appropriate)*
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant Christ, have mercy.
All **Christ, have mercy.**

Celebrant Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Or Kyrie eleison, **Kyrie eleison**, Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison, Christe eleison, **Christe eleison**.
Kyrie eleison, **Kyrie eleison**, Kyrie eleison.

The Symbols *(If appropriate)*

*We use the symbols of earth, air, fire and water,
with words and forms as suggested or as may be appropriate.*

The Symbol of Earth *(Stand)*

*Natural objects, e.g. flowers or stones, are offered and perhaps
used to decorate the holy table.*

Group We offer this / these..... as a sign of the gifts of the
Member earth, the beauty of the earth and the nourishment of
the earth, the earth on which we depend, as a sign that
God is in all things, and all things are in God....

The Symbol of Air

*Three deep relaxing breaths can symbolise:
Breathe in - the light and love of God that unites us.
Breathe out - let go of all that separates.*

The Symbol of Fire

Celebrant Receive this fire, *(A flame is lit)*
a sign of the Fire of the Spirit.

All **Fire of love,
Fire that transforms,
Fire that is eternal.**

*The celebrant may elevate the flame and present it to the four cardinal
directions, as an expression of the fire of the Spirit which is offered to
all the world. During this time bells, gongs etc may be sounded.*

The celebrant touches the flame with the tips of his fingers and then brings his fingers to his eyes and across his head.

The dish with the flame may be passed round for the congregation to do likewise. If it is not practical for the people to touch the flame, then the flame may be carried around and the above movement observed when the flame is closest to them.

The Symbol of Water

Celebrant Through this water
May the mystery of the Divine Life touch us,
Cleanse us, purify us and renew us. (*Water is sprinkled*)

The Symbol of the Cross may also be used

Group member We hold this cross, (*A cross is held*)
as a reminder of Earth's suffering,
and a sign of God's love:
love, stronger than death,
love, that calls us
that we may also give of ourselves.

The cross may be presented for all to reverence as they wish.

The Reconciliation (*Sit or kneel*)

Celebrant Sharing this celebration,
let us confess all that prevents true communion:
the dark times of our self-centredness,
the wounding times of our divisions,
the cold times of our love.
So may we find peace,
and a quiet conscience. *Pause*

**All We confess the times
when we have put self-interest before love,
when we have allowed what is false
to obscure what is true,
when we have caused division and hurt
and failed in the life of the Spirit.
We pray for forgiveness, and healing.**

The absolution, assuring us of acceptance, forgiveness and healing.

Celebrant Christ Spirit of compassion,
you hold us in your love,
with our light and our shadow,
offering us the gift of life.

**All For the grace of forgiveness,
we give thanks.
For grace to forgive others,
and also ourselves,
we offer prayer.**

The Meditation

(Sit)

*In which we seek to practice inner quiet, that we may be open
to the Presence of God, and receptive to the Divine Word and Sacrament.*

*Brief words of introduction may be helpful,
including a direction for posture.*

**All Come, Light of our lives.
Come, Generous Spirit.
Come, Voice in the silence.
Come, to our poverty.
By the glory of your creation around us,
By the wind of your Spirit in this place,
By the power of your love within us,
Inspire and renew us,
That we may trust your living word
And rejoice in your living presence
Now and always.**

*We allow ourselves to be still in body and mind, letting go
of the things that occupy and distract us, that there may be a sacred
space for the indwelling spirit of God.*

So we are open to the movement of the Holy Spirit within us...

18 *Silence as appropriate, beginning and/or ending with sound.*

The Ministry of the Word

A prayer for the appropriate day. (The Collect)

*A reading or readings from Sacred Scripture,
and / or some other suitable source.*

A hymn, psalm or chant may be sung or recited.

The reading from the Gospel may begin with the words:

“Hear the holy Gospel according to ...”

and end with the words:

“This is the Gospel of Christ.”

All Thanks be to God.

*After a reading, comments and insights may be shared,
with opportunity for reflection.*

*This may be followed by a message and/or appropriate
activity (e.g. a recital, poem, drama,
contemplative circle dance or exercise).*

Short periods of silence may be observed.

The Commitment

(Stand)

Celebrant We commit ourselves

**All To look beyond
the things that separate us in the world
to our unity in the Spirit.**

Celebrant We commit ourselves

**All To look beyond
the deceptions and illusions of the world
to the Way, the Truth and the Life of the Spirit.**

Celebrant God is love,
unconditional love, pure love, ever-present.
May we love God
with all our heart, mind, soul and strength,

All and our neighbour as ourself.

Celebrant We are a one-world family.
May we reverence our world, and all that is in it,
seeking true justice and peace,

All as we show compassion and care to all.

Celebrant So shall we be free:

**All to play the Play of God,
dance the Dance of God,**

Celebrant in morning and evening,
in the ebb and flow of life,

**All and to know that all is well,
and all manner of things shall be well,
and that in the Divine Life
we have Eternal Life.**

The Intercessions *(Sit or kneel)*

Celebrant Let us pray.

As we are open to the Divine Light,
let us go where the Spirit calls us,
that we may offer prayers,
and give thanks for blessings received.

Prayers and thanks may be offered for:

*The spiritual lives of individuals and communities;
International and national concerns, for peace and justice;
Social concerns and community life;
Particular needs;
Those who have died.*

Seasonal intercessions may be used as appropriate.

After each prayer a brief silence may be kept. Then may be said:

Celebrant Lord, hear us. *or* Lord, in your mercy,

All Lord, graciously hear us. Hear our prayer

or In the power of the Spirit:

All We offer our prayer.

Alternatively, or in addition, all may be invited to contribute in whatever way that seems appropriate.

Conclusion

**All We praise and thank you
for the abundance of your grace,
looking to the gathering together of us all
in the fullness of the Love of Christ. Amen.**

An Alternative form of Intercession

Celebrant Let us pray.

God of compassion,
we pray for the spiritual lives of all your people,
that they may find their life in your love,
and for those in spiritual danger or need,

All May we all grow in the life of the Spirit.

Celebrant We pray for all who govern, for all in authority,
and for all who influence and shape the lives of others,

All That there may be Justice and Peace both near and far.

Celebrant We pray for this village / town / city / community,
and for all people in their relationships one with another,

All May we give of ourselves in Service and in Love.

Celebrant We pray for those who are poor in any way,
and all who suffer from sickness, trouble, pain or grief,

**All That they may find comfort, hope and healing
in their need and distress.**

Celebrant We pray that those who have died may enter into
your Peace and Joy,

All And that Light Perpetual may shine upon them.

Celebrant Let us offer particular prayers, as we hold in the light...
Names or concerns may be offered.

Celebrant We praise and thank you that all is being fulfilled
in the loving purposes of Christ.

All Amen.

Or Any other form of intercession which may be appropriate.

The Peace

(Stand)

Either

Celebrant Together in Christ,
let us celebrate the unity we share.
As many grains are gathered to make bread,
And much fruit is mixed to make wine,
So we who are many,
and come from many places,
are one in the Divine Life.

and/or May the peace of Christ be with you.

All And also with you.

Or **All We swear by peace and love to stand,
heart to heart, and hand in hand.
Mark, O Spirit, and hear us now,
confirming this, our sacred vow.**

A sign of peace and unity may be shared.

The Offertory

A hymn or chant may be sung. The altar table is prepared.

Celebrant Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. *(Stand)*
Through your goodness we have
this bread and wine to offer,
which the earth has given and human hands have made.
They will become our spiritual food and drink.

**All Blessed may we be,
as we offer ourselves to you,
that your life may shine through us,
and your light give light to the world.**

*In addition to the bread and the wine there may be a wish
to present things that represent particular offerings.*

The Eucharistic Prayer

Celebrant We celebrate the Sacred Mystery:

All God in us and us in God.

Celebrant We celebrate the Sacred Presence:

All The Presence here, the Presence now.

Celebrant We offer thanks and praise to you, Living God,
And with hearts lifted high,
In the communion of your love,
We find your life among us
And we find our life in you.

A seasonal preface may be inserted here.

Therefore with all that is around us,
Gifts of creation,
And all that is within us,
Our loves, our joys and our tears,
Our hopes and our dreams,

All We sing to you.

Celebrant With the holy angels of light
Who guide and protect us,
And with the whole company of heaven,
With your blessed ones who have gone before us,
And those who shall come after,

All We sing to you.

Celebrant With brothers and sisters,
East and West, North and South,
And with our loved ones,
Separate from us now,
Who yet in this mystery are close to us,
We join in the song of your unending glory:

**All Holy, Holy, Holy,
God of grace and truth,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The celebration continues to the Receiving of the Sacrament (page 30) either in form "A" as follows, or with form "B" on page 28.

Celebrant Living God,
Giver of all holiness,
Source of all love,
Fountain of all wisdom,
You take the dry bread of Earth
And turn it into the banquet of Heaven.
You take the good wine of creation
And quicken us with the new life of your Spirit.
You dry our tears,
And turn our pain to joy.
You fill the empty places of our hearts,
And bring your light into our darkness.
You take the broken pieces of our lives
And restore us to wholeness.
You bring order out of our chaos
Saving us by love:
The love shown by the cross,
The love which is with us now,
The love which carries us
Through death to resurrection.

**All You are the fullness of our being.
You are the mystery of our salvation.
You are the goal of our existence.**

Celebrant So now we pray: *(Sit, kneel or stand)*

**All For the gift of yourself
Through this bread which we break in your name,
That by the power of your Holy Spirit
It may be for us and all creation
The Bread of Heaven,
The Body of Christ,
Your holy presence
That unites us in yourself.**

Celebrant Jesus broke the bread
And gave it to his friends, saying:
“Take this, all of you, and eat it;
This is my Body,
Which is given for you.”

**All For the gift of yourself
Through this cup which we share,
That by the power of your Holy Spirit
It may be for us and all creation
The Cup of Salvation,
The Life of Christ,
Poured out to bring healing and wholeness,
Poured out for the life of us all.**

Celebrant Jesus gave the cup to his friends, saying:
“Take this, all of you, and drink from it:
This is my blood of the new covenant, which is
Poured out for many. Do this in memory of me.”

As we celebrate these holy mysteries
May we and all for whom we pray (.....)
Be open to the glory of your presence,
The beauty of your song,
And the healing power of your love.
For without you we are as nothing,
And our lives are empty and dead.

**All By the power of this holy sacrament
Turn us, that we turn to you,
Revive us, that we live your life on Earth,
Inspire us, that we show your glory
In thankfulness and praise
Now and for ever. Amen.**

Silence may be kept.

Celebrant Let us now join with the Church of all the
ages and all parts of the world as we say together:

All

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.	<i>or</i>	Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; in 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 the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.		For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

**All Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

**Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

**Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal,
give us your peace.**

Celebrant The Life of Christ is offered
for the life of the world.
Here is the Presence of Christ in bread and wine.
The gifts of God for the people of God,
that we may be one with God and in God.

(or other words of invitation)

**All The gifts of life,
The gifts which make us whole.**

*A bell or gong may be sounded.
Continue at "Receiving the Sacrament" on page 30.*

Form “B”

Celebrant Rejoicing in the indwelling Spirit of God in all creation,
we bring to mind in this celebration:

The world around us, and all that is close to us in our lives,

All This is my body.

The vastness of the Cosmos, the fragile earth,

This is my body.

The air we breathe, the sounds we hear,

This is my body.

The beauty of nature,
the uniqueness of living forms,

This is my body.

Those whom we love, our families and friends,

We are all one.

Those whom we meet in daily life,
and those whom we know to be in need,

We are all one.

The broken body of the world,
and all who we hold in our prayers,

We are all one.

Those who have passed from this world,
and all who rejoice in the life of the Spirit,

We are all one.

We take this bread, praying that,
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
It may be for us
The Body of Christ

Given for us all,

The bread is elevated

The Divine Presence, that awakens us

To all that is sacred, all that is holy,

Within us and within all creation. **Amen.**

Celebrant Rejoicing in the indwelling Spirit of God in our lives,
we bring to this celebration:

Our gifts and our understanding, **(All) For the life of us all.**

Our weaknesses and our vulnerability, **For the life of us all.**

Our health and our sickness, **For the life of us all.**

Our happiness and our laughter, **For the life of us all.**

Our suffering and our tears, **For the life of us all.**

The wildness, the passion that moves us, **For the life of us all.**

The faith that calls us, **For the life of us all.**

The love that inspires us, **For the life of us all.**

We take this cup, praying that,
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
It may be for us
The Life of Christ
For the life of us all,
That the life of us all
May be the Life of Christ, *The cup is elevated.*
The Life Eternal. **Amen.**

Silence may be kept.

Celebrant Let us now join with the Church of all the *(Sit or kneel)*
ages and all parts of the world as we say together:

The Lord's Prayer (see page 27), and continue:

Celebrant We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Celebrant We all come from the One
and to the One we shall return,
the One, the fullness of all.

Celebrant A-u-m. **(All) A-u-m . . . (Repeat) Shanti x 3 (Chant)**
(If appropriate) A-u-m is the Divine Sound, cf. A-men. Shanti = Peace

A pause: an opportunity for individual expressions of thanks...

**All Praise and honour, glory and power,
be unto our God, now and for ever.
May we go forward on our journey
in the strength of your Spirit,
and, as we have shared heavenly things,
so may we find heaven in earthly things,
as we offer ourselves
to you and to each other,
and allow your love to lead us
to Eternal Life.**

A hymn / spiritual song may be sung here, or after the blessing.

Celebrant The blessing of God be upon you
as you go out into the world...
The light of Christ shine from within you,
that you may be a blessing to the world,
and the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit
guide and protect you, now and forever.

All Amen.

or

**All Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you. Amen.**

Or any suitable blessing.

Celebrant Let us remain in the Light,
that we may be lights in the world,
held together in love.

All Amen.



Morning and Evening Prayer

Dedicated to the Children of Grail Trust Home, Chinnammalpuram, South India, who affirmed for me the validity of this form of prayer. The Grail Trust Home is supported by the Grail Trust, a registered charity.

Jonathan Robinson



The Morning and Evening Prayers of the Church originated in an ancient monastic context. Life has changed enormously since then, and with these changes there has undoubtedly come a change in consciousness. So appropriate forms of prayer also need to change. However the true nature of prayer remains unchanging. It is about our life with God. Prayer lifts the mind to God. Prayer is about relationships. It is about being fully human. It is about our life in the Divine Life and in the Eternal Life, and recognising the life of the eternal and divine within us.

The Grail Liturgies: Morning and Evening Prayer offer a structure for prayer, and should be used with flexibility. They are inclusive, welcoming all and encouraging participation. They are contemplative, offering space for quiet and reflection. They recognise our need for ‘inner space’ and the value of a time set aside for spiritual practice in the morning and the evening of the day.

Whilst originating from Christian experience and scripture, they also accommodate insights from other great religious and spiritual traditions. In this post-modern age no one system has a monopoly of truth, and we are all fellow travellers on our spiritual journeys. So these prayers do not require religious belonging or academic qualification: only a willingness to be open to wherever the Spirit will lead us.

May you find them helpful. Regular and committed use brings spiritual nourishment, comfort and inspiration.

Morning Prayer

To be used in whatever setting is appropriate, preferably “in the round.” The contents given here are intended as a guide, to be adapted as appropriate.

Bold print indicates suggestions for all to share.

Posture is important. It focuses attention and expresses intention and state of mind. Participants will adopt the position where they feel comfortable. It is recommended that posture is relaxed, balanced and focused.

Hymns, chants and spiritual songs may be sung as appropriate.

The sound may be, for example, a sounding bowl, gong or bell.

The gesture of salutation can be a bow, with hands together.

A candle is lit.

Sound Pause

The Light of the world is here,

A candle is raised

Eternal Light, life-giving Spirit.

The Light of the world is here,

True life of us all.

*Opportunity for **Meditation**,
beginning and / or ending with sound.*

Blessed be this day
And all it shall bring.

Blessed be this place
And all who are here.

Blessed be all creation
And all that has life.

Blessed be our living and our dying
And our life in the Spirit.

Spirit of Light and Love,

**Essence of all being,
Fullness of all truth,
Hope of all ages,
You are the Eternal One,
Revealed in many forms,
Worthy of all our devotion,
In this and all worlds,
In time and in eternity.**

Sound Salutation

Alleluia, Alleluia

Alleluia. Fill us with your Light and your Love.

We give thanks for the light of this new day, *The candle is raised.*

**A sign of the eternal Light,
Always with us,
Always shining,
Even in darkest night.**

Sound Salutation

We are called by the Light,

**Called to dwell in the Light,
The Pure Light of the Spirit,
The Light of life,
Light that enlightens us all.**

Sound Salutation

We are called to be the Light,

**Light of Christ,
Light in the world,
Light to friend and stranger,
Light to all sentient life.**

Sound Salutation

The flame, signifying the Light of God, may then be touched in an appropriate way to signify our receiving of the Light, e.g. with the tips of the fingers of both hands, which are then brought to the eyes and across the head.

Opportunity for readings from scripture and other sources as appropriate, also for reflection and appropriate activity.

Opportunity for singing or reciting.

Intercessory prayers may be offered here.

The prayers may conclude with:

In the power of the Spirit:

The candle is raised.

We offer our prayer.

Holy the Light of God,
Holy the Light in us all.
The Light that shines in the darkness,
And clears away the mists of our pain and ignorance.
The Light that shows us the way
To true freedom and joy,
And restores us to wholeness of life.

**We offer thanks and praise
For all the blessings of life.
In all that this day brings
May we be guided by your Holy Spirit,
And held in your protective closeness,
That we may uphold that which is good,
That we may have compassion and care for each other,
And be united in the fullness of love. Amen.**

Other prayers may be included.

In the journey of life: **the Divine Presence is with us.**
In the journey of life: **the Divine Power is with us.**
In the journey of life: **the Divine Love is with us.**

Oil may be placed between the eye-brows as a blessing for spiritual seeing and understanding.

This may be passed from person to person, with the words:

“May you see with the eyes of Christ.” **(Amen – if you wish)**

The Divine Blessing:

**The Love of God,
The Peace of God,
The Warmth of God,
The Surprise of God,
The Completeness of God,
Be among us and within us
Now and forever. Amen.**

and / or:

Peace be with us,
And life eternal. **Amen.**

If appropriate, a sign of peace may be shared.

The flame is extinguished.

Evening Prayer

To be used in whatever setting is appropriate, preferably “in the round.” The contents given here are intended as a guide, to be adapted as appropriate. Different members of the group may be encouraged to share in leading different parts of the Service.

Bold print indicates suggestions for all to share.

Posture is important. It focuses attention and expresses intention and state of mind. Participants will adopt the position where they feel comfortable. It is recommended that posture is relaxed, balanced and focused.

Hymns, chants and spiritual songs may be sung as appropriate.

The sound may be, for example, a sounding bowl, gong or bell.

The gesture of salutation may be a bow, with hands together.

A candle is lit.

Sound Pause

The Light of the World is here:

A candle is raised

**Beyond change and separation,
Beyond darkness and illusion.**

The Light of the World is here:

**Present now, present always,
Holding us in life.**

*Opportunity for **Meditation**, here or later as indicated.
The **Meditation** may begin and/or end with sound.*

Day and night, movement and stillness,
The air we breathe, to the distant stars,
The wonder of nature, the mystery of being:
All echo the glory of Sacred Presence:

**The One beyond all names,
The One revealed by many names:
The One, the fullness of all.**

Sound Salutation

Let us not dwell on what divides us,
For what is separate must pass away.

**Let us dwell on what unites us.
We are members one of another
In the One Body of Christ.**

We are fellow travellers
In the journey of life,
In the one family of the Spirit.

**Never the spirit was born,
Never the spirit will cease to be.
Never was time it was not;
End and beginning are dreams.**

We are the breath of the one God,
The sound of the One,
The eyes and ears of the One,
The hands and feet of the One.

**So may the Holy Spirit of God,
Live in us, speak through us,
Move through us, love through us.**

Sound Salutation

We give thanks for the blessings
of this and every day.

A candle is raised

The flame, signifying the Light of Christ, may be touched in an appropriate way to signify our receiving of the Light, e.g with the tips of the fingers of both hands, which are then brought to the eyes and across the head.

**Before the ending of the day
Creator of the worlds we pray,
Our hearts attune to perfect praise,
A hymn from all creation raise.**

**As night enfolds receding day
All fantasies and fears allay,
The light of faithfulness increase,
Our minds be stayed on Christ's own peace.**

**O Trinity, Love, Power and Light
Awaken us to inward sight,
Clear vision grant, and with the day
Unveil the Life, the Truth, the Way. Amen.**

Opportunity for readings from scripture and other sources as appropriate, also for reflection, and appropriate activity.

Opportunity for singing or reciting.

As the curtain of night draws upon us
May we know that we are in the presence
Of the Holy Beings of Light, the holy angels,
And all the company of heaven.
May we know the light beyond the darkness
And protection from the powers of evil.
May we let go of the distractions of the world,
The illusions, the fears, the pain...
So may we find joy in our eternal home,
Seeing Christ in all,
And worldly diversity,
Reflecting divine unity.

"God is Love. Those who dwell in love dwell in God,
and God in them. Let us love one another, for love is of God,
and everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God.
Those who do not love know not God, for God is love."

**God be in my head,
And in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at mine end, and at my departing.**

*Opportunity for **Meditation**, (if not earlier,) beginning and/or ending with sound.*

Let us hold in the Divine Light:

Each other...

All for whom we have a particular desire to pray this night...

This city / town / village...

Our country... Our world...

The sacredness of all life...

The challenges that confront us...

The poor and those in need, the sick and the dying...

Victims of violence, war and oppression...

Those who are in darkness, ignorance or despair...

Those who are happy,

that they may find God in their happiness...

Those who suffer, that they may know compassion,

and the Christ who is with them in their pain...

And / or particular intercessions may be offered as appropriate.

The prayers may conclude with:

In the power of the Spirit: **We offer our prayer.** *A candle is raised.*

Prayer for Peace:

Lead us from death to life,

From falsehood to truth,

From hatred to love,

From war to peace,

From despair to hope,

From fear to trust.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe.

Blessed are you,

The Holy One, the Compassionate,

Life of our life, Spirit of our spirit,

Whose Word holds us in being:

**For all that has been this day,
We give you thanks.
For all that is now,
We hold in your presence.
For all that shall be,
We commend to your mercy.**

For any hurts that we may have caused this day,
And any whom we have offended:

We pray for pardon.

From the tyranny of fear, loneliness or despair,
And all that divides:

We pray for delivery.

In challenges, danger or temptation that may lie ahead of us:

We pray for strength and protection.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may rest content in you. **Amen.**

Other prayers may be included.

**From the unreal, lead us to the Real,
From darkness, lead us to Light,
And from what passes away, lead us to what is Eternal.**

Oil may be placed between the eye-brows as a blessing for spiritual seeing and understanding.

This may be passed from person to person, with the words:

“May you see with the eyes of Christ.” (**Amen** – *if you wish*)

The Divine Blessing:

**The Love of God,
The Peace of God,
The Warmth of God,
The Surprise of God,
The Completeness of God,
Be among us and within us
Now and forever. Amen.**

and / or:

Waking and sleeping

**We commit ourselves to the Divine Light,
We commit ourselves to the Divine Love. Amen.**

If appropriate, a sign of peace may be shared.

The flame is extinguished.



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