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The Lord's Prayer in the Eucharist

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A Paper Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Theology of Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Liturgical Studies.

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY Saint John's University Collegeville, Minnesota

May 5, 2003

Form for Director's Signature

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Form for Research Disclosure

The Lord's Prayer in the Eucharist

Description of the Project:

This paper presents an exegetical analysis of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer followed by an historical and theological review of its ritual usage within the communion rite. By examining each petition in detail, we see a close parallel between the contents of this prayer and the contents of the Eucharistic Prayer. This prayer helps us to more concretely grasp what it means to be a eucharistic people. Given this understanding, the Lord's Prayer's ritual usage is examined throughout history. In particular, we look at shifts in who prays the various parts of the prayer during the liturgy, the contents and method of praying the embolism, and the presence of the doxology. This paper concludes by suggesting that one area not addressed by the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, the position of the Lord's Prayer within the communion rite, is in need of attention. The Lord's Prayer would function more clearly as preparation for communion if it were placed after the fraction rite, as it was prior to the 6th-century reforms of Gregory the Great.

This paper may be duplicated.

Sherri Vallee

Sherri L. Vallee

May 5, 2003

The Lord's Prayer has a long history of association with the celebration of the Eucharist. As early as 350 CE, we have a definitive witness to its presence during the communion rite.¹ Its association with the communion rite has been continuous, even as our theology of Eucharist has ebbed and flowed, and as participation in receiving communion has varied dramatically over the centuries. Even when communion began to be received after mass in the late Middle Ages, rather than during mass, the Lord's Praver continued to be a significant part of one's preparation for receiving communion.² It was recited and continues to be recited prior to offering communion to the sick and when aiving viaticum.³ Despite the ubiguity of the Lord's Prayer's presence in the communion rite, the method of praying the prayer and the existence and format of the embolism and doxology have varied significantly in different regions of the Church and across time. This paper will begin by analyzing the content of the praver petition-bypetition, with particular attention to its implications for our theology of Eucharist and the degree to which the content is paralleled elsewhere in the eucharistic celebration. Reflecting on the content of the petitions will lead to a richer understanding of how this

prayer functions as preparation for communion, and what it teaches us about being a

¹ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 23, "*De sacra liturgia et communione*" (*PG* 23:1117 ff.) cited in Raymond E Brown, S.S., "The *Pater Noster* as an Eschatological Prayer," *Theological Studies* 22 (1961): 179; Joachim Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," in *New Testament Issues*, ed. Richard Batey (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 89-90. Because the Lord's Prayer was reserved for Christians only, it would have been unusual to mention it in any apologetic texts, so it is possible that it was used earlier, but we have no evidence to confirm this. Some believe that St. Cyprian (d. 258) suggests a eucharistic context in his commentary of the Lord's Prayer, but this eucharistic connection is not explicit. For this latter argument, see Noële Maurice Denis-Boulet, "La place du Notre Père dans la Liturgie," *La Maison-Dieu* 85 (1966), 73-74.

² Nathan Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 226; Reginald M. Woolley, ed., *The Gilbertine Rite*, vol. 1 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1921), 45. The original Latin reads: "sacerdos casulum deponat et super populum prostratum et pectora cum dominica oracione tundentes det absolucionem ... deinde cum magna cautella communicet uenientes."

³ Joseph A. Jungmann, S.J., *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, vol. II, trans. F. A. Brunner, C.SS.R. (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1955), 281; Denis-Boulet, 81; Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*, Canadian edition (Ottawa: Concacan, 1983), 156, 224, 60, 68.

eucharistic people. Secondly, we will examine the three main areas in which Vatican II changed the liturgical usage of this prayer in the mass, i.e. who says the words to the prayer, the content and method of praying the embolism, and the presence of the doxology. The history of these three areas will be considered in order to demonstrate the value of the Vatican II developments. Finally, we will consider the area that Vatican II failed to address, the position of the Lord's Prayer within the mass. In the East, and in the West prior to the papacy of Gregory the Great, the Lord's Prayer occurred after the fraction rite. The reasons for placing it before the fraction rite no longer apply. Given the close connection between the Lord's Prayer and our actual reception of communion, this paper proposes that a more logical order would be to have the Lord's Prayer situated after the breaking of the bread and after the sign of peace; it would then function more effectively as preparation for communion.

Versions of the Lord's Prayer

There are differences between the Lord's Prayer in Luke's gospel (Luke 11:2-4) and in Matthew's gospel (Matt 6:9-13). While it is possible that Jesus simply gave two versions of the prayer at two different times and that these two different versions of this prayer were recorded in the two gospels,⁴ it seems more probable that the differences between the two gospel versions already reflect the liturgical usage of two different communities. Matthew was preaching to Jewish Christians, whereas Luke was writing for a Gentile Christian community which would not have been accustomed to such a rich liturgical tradition. Liturgical usage may account for some aspects of the fuller form that we find in Matthew's gospel. For example, Luke begins abruptly, "Father," whereas

⁴ Jeremias, 93.

Matthew follows a more traditionally Jewish format, "Our Father in heaven."⁵ The addition of the final petition, "But deliver us from evil," likewise seems to reflect liturgical usage, adding symmetry where symmetry would have been lacking otherwise.⁶ Luke's version may have been modified to reflect the needs of his Gentile audience, diminishing the eschatological focus. The general scholarly consensus seems to suggest that, assuming that Jesus gave a single version of the prayer that was then adapted by early Christian communities, the choice of petitions and the sparseness of the Lucan version are likely more ancient, whereas the wording of the petitions themselves in Matthew's gospel is likely more original.⁷ This background will be useful as we consider petitions in our current prayer.

"Our Father, Who Art in Heaven"

While addressing a deity as "Father" pre-existed Christianity, it was quite revolutionary to be so intimate with God as to use the childlike term, '*Abba*.' The use of this term denotes more than familiarity with God. It also conveys a Christology: Jesus is the Son of God, and therefore Jesus has the opportunity to call God *Abba*. Through our alliance with Jesus, through our membership in Jesus' church, through our baptism, we share in this privilege and are able to call God *Abba*.⁸ Such an affectionate title reveals a childlike faith, as we approach God with "simplicity, intimacy, [and] confidence."⁹

Today, the Lord's Prayer tends to have a very public character. It is the first prayer that many of us learned as children and most people in today's society know it. Many of us even grew up praying it daily in public school. The Lord's Prayer reflected the

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⁵ All scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version translation.

⁶ Jeremias, 92.

⁷ Brown, 177-178, 208; Jeremias, 90-93.

⁸ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 94-96.

⁹ Joachim Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 97, cited in Leonardo Boff, *The Lord's Prayer: The Prayer of Integral Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1983), 28.

predominantly Christian culture and was something that bound us together across denominational lines. Given today's multicultural sensitivity and the growing exclusion of religion from public life, it is no longer common to prav the Lord's Praver in secular settings, but to many, it still bears that very public connotation.¹⁰ This differs dramatically from the history, where the Lord's Praver was praved only by members of the Christian community. In preparation for baptism, the *traditio* of the Lord's Praver to the catechumen was one of the last preparatory stages before baptism. In some places, the newly baptized person would emerge from the baptismal pool, face East, and immediately recite the Lord's Praver, the first action as a baptized person.¹¹ The Lord's Prayer has an intimate connection with our baptismal identity. Similarly, within the Eucharist, we find the Lord's Praver at the most intimate point of the lituray. In early Church practice, any non-baptized persons would have been dismissed before the Liturgy of the Eucharist began. The only ones present to pray the Lord's Prayer during the mass would therefore be members of the Christian community.¹² The Lord's Praver. like Eucharist, is the privileged prayer of baptized members of the Christian community.

With privilege comes responsibility, and this invocation also reminds us of our duty to behave as sons and daughters of God.¹³ Tertullian goes further to note that if we dare to call God "Father" we are saying something about our identity as Church, because it is

¹⁰ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 89-90.

¹¹ John Chrysostom, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians*, PG 62:342, cited in Denis-Boulet, 77. See also *Const. Apost.* vii. 45, cited in T. W. Manson, "The Lord's Prayer," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 38 (1955): 101.

¹² Manson, "The Lord's Prayer," 101; I.-H. Dalmais, o.p., "L'introduction et l'embolisme de l'Oraison dominicale dans la célébration eucharistique," *La Maison-Dieu* 85 (1966): 100. Unfortunately, it is surprising how quickly the Lord's Prayer began to lose its unique identity as the prayer of the baptized. Already in the early 5th century, Peter Chrysologus, bishop of Ravenna (d. 450), reports that catechumens are praying the Lord's Prayer. See Denis-Boulet, 78.

¹³ Adalbert Hamman, ofm, "Le Notre Père dans la catéchèse des Pères de l'Église," *La Maison-Dieu* 85 (1966): 46.

only through the Church that we become children of God.¹⁴ The plural "our" reminds us that, united by God, we form a single family of believers.¹⁵

When we observe the dismissal rites and the *traditio* rite for this prayer within the RCIA, we are reinforcing its status as the privileged prayer of the Christian community.¹⁶ The eucharistic prayer itself is always addressed to God the Father, and we begin with praise to God, so we already note a commonality between the two prayers.

"Hallowed by Thy Name, Thy Kingdom Come"

There is a parallelism between these two petitions; both reflect eschatological desires: that God's name be praised by all, and that the kingdom which God has promised will come into our midst. This is far more than a desire that people everywhere recognize God's sovereignty. Since this prayer is addressed to God, the prayer is essentially asking God to hasten the coming of the fullness of the kingdom, at which time God's name will be hallowed. In Hebrew thought, a name is closely identified with the individual bearing that name. God's name is hallowed through creation, and through the hallowing of that creation. In John's gospel, as Jesus prepares for his pending death, he prays, "Father, glorify your name." A voice from heaven then responds, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again" (John 12:28). This pericope seems to suggest that Christ's life, death and resurrection represent a hallowing of God's name. By

¹⁴ Tertullian, *De Oratione* 2, cited in Hamman, 45.

¹⁵ Jacques Dupont and Pierre Bonnard, "Le Notre Père: notes exégétiques," *La Maison-Dieu* 85 (1966): 8.

¹⁶ The Presentation of the Lord's Prayer to the elect occurs preferably within mass during the Fifth Week of Lent, after the third scrutiny. It is presented orally in the form of a gospel reading. Given the dismissals that are to occur before the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the elect will pray this prayer for the first time with the assembly on the Easter Vigil as they prepare for their first reception of communion. See Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Canadian Edition (Ottawa: Concacan, 1987), ¶ 165-171.

Eucharist, we are therefore hallowing God's name. We know that the reign of God has already been inaugurated (c.f. Matt 12:28; Luke 9:20, 10:8-12) and we pray for its fulfillment, for the day when all will recognize the glory of God, when all creation will be sanctified and when the fullness of God's reign will be visibly before us.¹⁷

This petition also conveys social justice implications, because we sanctify or blaspheme God's name through our actions.¹⁸ As the Church, we represent God to others, and through our actions we can contribute to the sanctification of God's name. This prayer in some ways, therefore, petitions for our good behaviour, that we may worthily represent our God. Tertullian similarly sees a missionary dimension to the petition that God's name be sanctified; God's name is truly sanctified when all of humanity give God honour and praise.¹⁹

Many of these same themes are echoed in our eucharistic prayers. Eucharistic Prayer II begins, "Lord, you are holy indeed, the fountain of all holiness."²⁰ Eucharistic Prayer III begins, "Father, you are holy indeed, and all creation rightly gives you praise." Memorial acclamation #3 likewise looks forward to the fulfillment of God's kingdom, when Christ will "come in glory." The eucharistic doxology concludes, "all glory and honour is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever." In the eucharistic prayer, therefore, we are already experiencing a glimpse of what it means for God's name to be hallowed and for the kingdom to have come. Moreover, as we pray the eucharistic prayer, we enter into the paschal mystery, and thereby hallow God's name.

¹⁷ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 96-97; Brown, 185-191; T. W. Manson, "The Lord's Prayer: II," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 38 (1955): 439.

¹⁸ Many patristic writers made this observation, including John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Augustine. See Hamman, 47.

¹⁹ Hamman, 48.

²⁰ All citations of eucharistic prayers are taken from *Living with Christ* 27 (April 2003): 15-30, unless otherwise noted.

"Thy Will Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven."

At one level, this petition could reflect a desire that all of humanity follow God's will. However, it is important to be clear on what we mean by God's will. When Jesus indicates that he came to do "the will of him who sent me" (John 6:38; see also Heb. 10:7-10), the salvific plan of God is at issue. The ultimate goal of this plan is the redemption of the entire universe, the subjection of all things to God's will through Jesus Christ. The petition expresses a longing for a coming together of the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21:1-5), when God "will wipe every tear from [our] eyes [and] death will be no more" (Rev. 21:4).²¹

God's will is already done in heaven; it is on earth that God's will continues to be opposed; it is on earth that we continue to find structural sin and social injustice. This petition requests that the will of God be done on earth as soon as possible, as it is already done in heaven. When this happens, the end will come; God will be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).²²

Origen suggests that this petition implies that each of us needs to strive to do God's will. Through this effort, we will be united with Christ, who also did the will of the Father. Aligning ourselves with Christ's actions, we become united with Christ, and enter into a personal, spiritual union. This petition therefore conveys a notion of conversion, as those on earth are transformed to be able to behave as those in heaven.²³

This coming together of earth and heaven is echoed in the eucharistic prayer when we pray the Sanctus.

 ²¹ Brown, 191-194.
 ²² Boff, 71-72.
 ²³ Hamman, 84-85.

"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread."

This petition has captured a wide variety of rich interpretations, ranging from present day concerns to eschatological concerns. Bread has been interpreted literally as bread, or more figuratively as Word of God, Eucharist, or heavenly banquet. None of these interpretations should be considered incorrect; the multiple layers of possible meaning combine to offer a richness and a depth with the power to evoke an indescribable awareness of our dependence upon God and a recognition of the boundlessness of God's love and generosity.

The different tenses used in the original Greek versions of the Lucan and Matthean accounts contribute to contradictory conclusions about the imminent or eschatological nature of this petition. Matthew uses the aorist imperative tense, which implies an action that begins at a definite point (i.e. 'start doing something'), whereas Luke uses the present imperative, which normally denotes an ongoing, continuing action (i.e. 'keep on doing something'). Moreover, Luke's version says "each day" whereas Matthew's indicates "today." Luke's petition could therefore be translated as "keep on giving us our daily bread each day," leading to a present-day, here-and-now interpretation, whereas Matthew's version could carry eschatological implications, as we pray for God to begin today to give us the bread that will nourish us forever.²⁴

Jerome favoured the latter, eschatological interpretation of the petition. Drawing on the Gospel of the Nazarenes, an Aramaic translation of Matthew's Gospel, Jerome notes that there is a strong eschatological dimension of the Aramaic term *mahar*. This is significant because the translator likely used the word that was in common usage in

²⁴ As noted earlier, where the wording of the petitions differ, scholars generally accept Matthew's version to be more original. As Luke's community saw less likelihood in the imminent end of the world, it would make sense for the petitions to be altered to provide less focus on this dimension.

Aramaic liturgies at the time, rather than maintaining an exact translation of the Greek. We would therefore be asking for our bread for the future, for the last days. This petition asks for the bread of life, not just for our day-to-day sustenance. This eschatological dimension was dominant in commentaries in the first few centuries of the Church.²⁵

Jeremias makes the argument that this focus on our future bread does not preclude reference to our daily bread in the here-and-now, because "in the realm of faith, all earthly things are hallowed."²⁶ Similarly, the prayer includes the words "this day." Every meal is a meal in God's presence; we are asking for the heavenly feast, and we are recognizing that every meal that we share is a participation in and an anticipation of that heavenly banquet. Furthermore, trusting in God for our daily bread each day frees us from anxiety so that we can concentrate ourselves and our powers on the work that awaits us. This has implications for our ability to be of service to the community.²⁷

Chrysostom interpreted the emphasis on 'today' as a contrast with the worries of tomorrow.²⁸ Just as God commanded the Israelites to collect only enough manna in the desert for their needs each day (Ex. 16), if we pray that our daily bread be given to us today, there is a presupposition of a lack of worry about tomorrow's needs. This implies a trust in God's ongoing generosity. This same idea is found in the gospels, where Jesus instructs his followers not to worry about the morrow (Matt. 6:34), to travel with few possessions (Mark 6:8), and to place their trust in God.²⁹

Tertullian, Cyprian and Ambrose all saw the reference to 'daily bread' as a reference to the Eucharist. Ambrose even went so far as to use the praver as a proof-text to

 ²⁵ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 97-98.
 ²⁶ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 98.
 ²⁷ Manson, "The Lord's Prayer: II," 442-443.

²⁸ Hamman, 53.

²⁹ Brown, 194-199.

support the idea of daily Eucharist.³⁰

According to the 2002 *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* [hereafter GIRM], "the Lord's Prayer is a petition for daily food, which for Christians means pre-eminently the eucharistic bread..." ³¹ When we recognize the manifold nature of the petition for our daily bread, this statement in the GIRM seems all the more significant. We recognize in the Eucharist our daily spiritual nourishment, while we experience at the same time a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

These same concepts are expressed in the eucharistic prayers when we pray the institution narrative. This is the blood of the "new and everlasting covenant." We ask for the Holy Spirit to make our gifts holy so that they may give us a very tangible indication of the kingdom which is to come. Moreover, when we pray for the epiclesis upon ourselves, and pray that God "enable us to share in the inheritance of your saints,"³² we are asking God for a share in that eternal nourishment.

"And Forgive us our Trespasses, As We Forgive Those who Trespass Against Us."

The *GIRM* describes the Lord's Prayer as "a plea for purification from sin, so that what is holy may, in fact, be given to those who are holy."³³

This pre-eminent focus on the cleansing power of this prayer has also been seen throughout our history. For example, according to a document thought to be written by Alcuin of York (d. 804), "the Saviour taught his disciples this prayer, in which the hope of faith is contained, and the acknowledgment of sins."³⁴ Praying it before communion

³⁰ Tertullian, *Treatise on the Sacraments*, 6, cited in Hamman, 55.

³¹ International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc., trans., *General Instruction of The Roman Missal* (August 2002), ¶ 81; hereafter GIRM. This is a proposed, draft translation of the 2002 *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani*.

³² Eucharistic Prayer III.

³³ GIRM ¶ 81.

³⁴ Author Uncertain (Alcuin?), *Disputatio Puerorum per interrogationes et responsiones*, *PL* 101: 1136C.

could therefore be seen as one last opportunity to acknowledge one's sins before God, while affirming the hope of faith. Perhaps this is one explanation for its inclusion in the Byzantine Mass of the Presanctified Gifts as preparation for communion,³⁵ and in the 13th-century Gilbertine rite for the distribution of communion to the laity after mass. In the Gilbertine rite, the priest pronounces the absolution over the people who lie prostrate, beating their breasts while reciting the Lord's Prayer.³⁶ The Lord's Prayer in the late Middle Ages appears to have taken on a predominantly penitential interpretation.

It seems quite likely, however, that the original meaning of these petitions went far beyond the preoccupation with one's own sins at this present time. There is a communal dimension, as we pray for forgiveness of all our sins, and as we recognize the need to forgive those who have hurt us.³⁷ "We cannot be at peace with the Father if we do not have a profound inner peace within ourselves in relation to all other human beings."³⁸

If we think of this prayer as eschatological, as preparation for the Day of Judgment, for that final great reckoning, we can see the connection with forgiving the sins of others.³⁹ We will be held accountable for our relationships with one another, and we therefore recognize that we need to heal relationships with those who have harmed

³⁵ Denis-Boulet, 80. The Mass for the pre-sanctified gifts entered the Western tradition for use on Good Friday in the seventh century.

³⁶ Mitchell, 226; Woolley, 45. The original Latin reads: "sacerdos casulum deponat et super populum prostratum et pectora cum dominica oracione tundentes det absolucionem ... deinde cum magna cautella communicet uenientes." Note that in this 13th century English communion rite, it is the people who pray the Lord's Prayer. As we note later in this paper, this is an unusual practice in the West; during mass, it is normally the priest-presider who says the words to the Lord's Prayer *in persona Christi.* ³⁷ Manson, "The Lord's Prayer: II." 443.

³⁸ Tissa Balasuriya, *The Eucharist and Human Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), 170.

³⁹ Jeremias, "The Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," 99.

us.⁴⁰ The gravity of the phrase "as we forgive those who trespass against us," is one of the reasons for saying that we *dare* to pray this prayer.⁴¹ In Matthew's gospel, the Greek text reads $'\alpha\phi\eta\kappa\alpha\mu\epsilon\nu$ (Matt 6:12), which translates "we have forgiven," not "we forgive." This subtlety was lost in Jerome's Vulgate translation and in our present day prayer, but it is significant. This is not an abstract generalization; we are expected to already have reconciled with those around us prior to praying this prayer. In response to some who omitted this phrase for fear of condemning themselves, John Cassian warned that, if they have not truly forgiven the sins of others, their sins would not be forgiven.⁴²

However, we are talking about more than just sin. The traditional English translation of the Lord's Prayer uses the word 'trespasses,' where Matthew's gospel used the word 'debts'.⁴³ 'Debts' is a more valuable translation in this context because it is more allencompassing. Recognizing ourselves as children of God, we are dependent on God for all that we have, and all that we are. We will never be able to repay to God all that God has given us. We stand in awe before God recognizing the immensity of the gifts we have received. Using the word 'debts' pulls us away from a self-flagellating focus on individual actions, and causes us to recognize our profound indebtedness to God. Forgiving our debtors is something that we would be incapable of doing without God's aid.

⁴² Denis-Boulet, 80.

⁴⁰ Brown, 199-204; Balasuriya, 169-170.

⁴¹ One of the suggested invitations for the Lord's Prayer in the proposed Canadian sacramentary captures this dimension of daring to pray: "By baptism and confirmation we became the children of God and received the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that we may share the banquet of Christ's sacrifice. Gathered around the table of the Lord, we dare to say:" See National Liturgy Office, ed., *The Roman Missal: The Sunday Sacramentary*, revised ed. (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, December 1998), unpublished, 560.

⁴³ The contemporary version of the Lord's Prayer is no better in its translation of this word, because it has used Luke's term 'sins,' whereas Matthew's term, 'debts,' is likely a more original interpretation. The contemporary version is provided by the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC), (1988), cited in Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Catholic Book of Worship III*, (Ottawa: Concacan, 1994), 14L.

Using the term 'debts,' instead of 'sins,' also recalls a significant tradition of Judaism, the jubilee year, when all debts are forgiven (Lev. 25:9-14). Our duty to one another extends beyond forgiveness for sins to encompass forgiveness for debts, much as Pope John Paul II emphasized in 1999, as we approached the Jubilee Year 2000.⁴⁴ There is a social justice imperative placed upon us to help the most poor in our society, to help those countries or those individuals who are burdened by debt, to help those whose debts would never be repaid without our initiative.

So, we can see two very different, but interrelated, ways of looking at this petition. Asking God to forgive our debts provides a recognition of the sovereignty of God in our lives. It also provides an opportunity to recognize the ways that we have not lived up to what God has asked of us. Both dimensions, the profound recognition of the magnitude of God's gifts and the penitential plea, force us to re-situate ourselves in a state of awe before God. This is indeed a valuable preparation for the reception of communion.

A similar penitential element is contained in our preparatory prayers for communion when we pray, "Lord I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the words and I shall be healed." This last utterance before being presented individually with the Body and Blood of Christ is a reaffirmation of our unworthiness and a confident appeal to God's mercy and God's transformative power. The communal nature of this encounter is demonstrated throughout the eucharistic prayer, as we share a common posture, and within the communion rite, as we share a sign of peace.

When Augustine commented on this petition, he urged his listeners to lift themselves

⁴⁴ The Jubilee 2000 initiative was promoted strongly by Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*. Its tangible goal was to see the forgiveness of the debts of the 50 poorest nations during the year 2000. Many governments complied, forgiving billions of dollars of debt, often tying forgiveness to the resolution of human rights abuses.

up and to not allow their souls to be glued to the earth.⁴⁵ In other words, rather than focus on the ways people have hurt us in this world, and allowing our attention to be caught by such actions, rather than holding grudges and withholding forgiveness, we should let go of those hurts, lift up our hearts and focus on God's mercy. At the beginning of the preface, when we "lift up our hearts to the Lord," we are following this advice.

"And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil."

This petition has perhaps caused more grief and confusion than any other. Why would God lead us into temptation? Why do we even need to ask God not to lead us into temptation? Raymond Brown suggests that this temptation is the eschatological trial that is identified in Rev. 3:10: "Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth."⁴⁶ By contrast, Geoffrey Willis argues that this petition could just as easily refer to the daily trials and tribulations of our lives, from which we wish to ask God's protection.⁴⁷

In either case, there is difficulty with the suggestion that God might lead us into temptation. This no doubt explains the many glosses to this text that have appeared from the earliest days of the tradition. Augustine, referring to a variety of manuscript versions, suggests that the petition should be understood, "do not allow us to be led into temptation."⁴⁸ The pseudo-Augustine writer added a subtle nuance: "Do not allow us to

⁴⁵ Augustine, *Sermon* 56:16, cited in Hamman, 58-59.

⁴⁶ Brown, 206.

⁴⁷ Geoffrey G. Willis, "Lead Us Not Into Temptation," *Downside Review* 93 (Oct. 1975): 281-282.
⁴⁸ Augustine, *De sermone Domini in monte secundum Mattheum libri duo* 9:20, *PL* XXXIV, 1282, cited in Willis, 285. The Latin is: "*Ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem*." See also Augustine, *De dono perseuerantiae* 6:12, *PL* XLV:1000, cited in Willis, 286. The Latin is: "*Ne patiaris nos induci in tentationem*."

be led into any temptation that we cannot handle."⁴⁹ Tertullian rephrases this, "Do not permit us to be seduced by the Tempter." Italian bishops recently approved a revised translation of the Lord's Prayer containing the Italian equivalent of "Do not abandon us to temptation, but deliver us from evil."⁵⁰ Similar glosses, expansions, or explanations can be seen in catechetical material, and even liturgical material, throughout our history.⁵¹

Origen saw human life to be full of temptations, so that it would be impossible for us not to experience temptation. He interpreted this petition as an appeal for God's help not to succumb to the temptation that surrounds us. Similarly, John Cassian explained that the petition did not mean, "Do not ever allow us to be tempted," but rather "Do not permit us to be conquered when tempted."⁵²

Maximus the Confessor saw the focus on temptation and evil in this prayer as a systematic appeal against all forces that impede humanity's process of divinization.⁵³ We pray for protection from evil so that we can associate ourselves more quickly and more fully with God's presence.

There is no explicit parallel to these latter two petitions elsewhere in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, except within the embolism.

The Lord's Prayer and its Relationship to the Eucharist

Having reviewed the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, we can note the following dominant themes and parallels with other aspects of our eucharistic celebration:

⁴⁹ Pseudo-Augustine, Serm. App. 84:4, *PL* XXXIX:1909, cited in Willis, 286. The Latin is "*Ne patiaris nos induci in tentationem guam ferre non possumus*."

⁵⁰ "News Briefs," America 186, no. 20 (June 17 2002), 5.

⁵¹ Willis, 285-288.

⁵² John Cassian, 9th Conference, cited in Hamman, 61.

⁵³ Nicholas Madden, "Maximus Confessor: On the Lord's Prayer," in *Scriptural Interpretations of the Fathers*, ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (Kill Lane, Blackrock, Co. Dublin: Four Courts Press Ltd., 1995), 138-139.

Petition	Theme	Eucharistic Connection
Our Father, who art in heaven	 sense of privilege and intimacy in being able to call God Abba identity within the Christian community duty to behave as sons and daughters of God 	We begin all eucharistic prayers with praise to God. By observing the RCIA dismissal rites, we stress the privileged nature of Eucharist.
Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come	 we hallow God's name through our actions in the world. a missionary appeal that all may hallow God's name. a plea for the hastening of the kingdom. 	We hallow God's name by entering into the paschal mystery during the eucharistic prayer. Our eucharistic doxology gives glory and honour to God. We experience a foretaste of that kingdom in our messianic banquet.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.	 salvation of the entire universe an end to the structural sin and social injustice that opposes God's will on earth. a desire for conversion, as we seek to be united with Christ in doing the will of the Father. 	This concept is reflected in the <i>Sanctus</i> in the eucharistic prayer, and in the prayer for the Church within the eucharistic prayer, where we pray that the Church throughout the world might grow in love.
Give us this day our daily bread;	 a taste of the bread of life trust in God to satisfy our needs desire for the eucharist 	The institution narrative, with its reference to the new and everlasting covenant, reflects the first two of these themes. The epiclesis over the people reinforces this bond of trust.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;	 a plea for purification from sin communal focus social justice responsibilities (debts) God's sovereignty 	Our preparatory prayer for communion, "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you" reflects this same desire for purification from sin and transformation. The communal dimension is reflected through the sign of peace and our common posture.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	 deliverance from the trial at the end time or support in life's trials. 	no explicit parallel except the embolism itself.
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Vatican II Changes to the Lord's Prayer usage in the mass

As part of the reforms to the liturgy initiated by Vatican II, three elements of the Lord's Prayer were altered. First, there is a change in who says the words to the prayer. Secondly, the embolism, previously prayed silently by the presider, is now said aloud, and its content has been adjusted. Thirdly, a doxology has been added to the prayer. All of these elements combine to foster a more fruitful engagement in the prayer. The historical development of each of these three areas will now be reviewed. A fourth area, the position of the Lord's Prayer within the communion rite, was not adjusted.

Who prays the components of the prayer

In the Eastern churches, the Lord's Prayer is said or sung by all.⁵⁴ This differs from the practice in the West, where it was common until Vatican II for the presider to say the words to the Lord's Prayer on behalf of the people.⁵⁵ Augustine reports that it is the priest who says the words to the prayer, while the assembly listens.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, it was always understood to be the people's prayer, albeit with an uneven distribution of participation. The Roman liturgy contained a small responsory said by the people.⁵⁷ The practice of having the assembly pronounce the final petition is evident as early as

⁵⁴ The only Eastern exception is the Armenian mass, where it was sung by the clerics. Later, Byzantine tradition evolved so that only the choir said the words, on behalf of the people. See Jungmann, 287. ⁵⁵ The Gallican church was the exception in the West; Gregory of Tours (d. 594) informs us that the Lord's Prayer was pronounced by all the people. See Gregory of Tours, De mir. s. Martini, II, 30 (PL 71: 954f), cited in Jungmann, 288. ⁵⁶ Dalmais, 93.

⁵⁷ Jungmann, 285-288.

the seventh century.⁵⁸ The embolism was said silently by the presider from about the year 1000.⁵⁹

From Trent to Vatican II, we find the following division of the portions of the prayer. The presider would say the Lord's prayer, including all the petitions except for the final one, "But deliver us from evil." This final petition was said by the people. Silently, the priest would then answer, "Amen." Curiously, the embolism would then follow the Amen, and it was accompanied by various actions that the presider would make with the paten. After elevating the paten, the priest would say, "Deliver us, we beseech you, Lord, from all evil things, past, present and future, and by the intercession of the blessed and glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Bearer of God, with your blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and Andrew, and all the saints..." The priest would then sign himself with the paten, moving it from his forehead to his chest, while continuing with the embolism: "give peace mercifully in our days..." He kissed the paten and continued, "so that, helped by your mercy, deliver [us] always from sin and protect [us] from all evil." At that point, he set down the paten, uncovered the chalice, genuflected, rose and proceeded with the fraction rite.⁶⁰ There was no doxology. When Martin Luther published his reformed formula for the mass in 1523, he chose to omit the embolism and all these motions with the paten.⁶¹

The Vatican II reforms to who says the prayer have resulted in an ingenious

⁵⁸ Dalmais, 94.

⁵⁹ Jungmann, 289.

⁶⁰ *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini* (Ratisbonae: F. Pustet, 1932), 322-323; Dalmais, 94. The Latin text of the embolism is: "Libera nos, quaesumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis, praeteritis, praesentibus et futuris: et intercedente beata et gloriosa semper Virgine Dei Genetrice Maria, cum beatis Apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo, atque Andrea, et omnibus Sanctis, da propitius pacem in diebus nostris: ut, ope misericordiae tuae adjuti, et a peccato simus semper liberi et ab omni pertubatione securi."

⁶¹ R.C.D. Jasper and G.J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 193.

combination. Within one prayer, we have unity, as all join together to pray the petitions of the prayer. We also have a dialogue, capable of symbolizing an encounter, as the presider says the embolism, and the people respond with the Amen. Sacraments have "the existence of interpersonal signs – of acts by which one person communicates with another. Involved in the sphere of personal encounter, they demand a human response by the one to whom the sign is directed."⁶² Thus, by restructuring the distribution of the Lord's Prayer into three components, one prayed in unity, one prayed by the presider, and one prayed by the people in response, an opportunity for personal encounter has been created, demanding a response, while also stressing the unity of the Body of Christ, who together pray this prayer.

Development of the Embolism

As we have seen, all but the final two of the Lord's Prayer petitions contain some echo of themes found elsewhere in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Themes are perhaps usually reiterated to facilitate their internalization as prayer and to reflect their importance and appropriateness for a eucharistic celebration. If we accept that important themes of prayer are worthy of repetition, the need for the embolism in the Lord's Prayer seems clearer. The embolism further develops the final one or sometimes two petitions of the Lord's Prayer. They are perhaps among the most theologically puzzling elements of the prayer, so the embolism is valuable not only for emphasis but also for an elucidation of the meaning. Presence of the embolism in the Roman mass

⁶² Edward J. Kilmartin, *The Sacraments: Signs of Christ, Sanctifier and High Priest* (Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1962), 23-24, cited in Jerome M. Hall, *We Have the Mind of Christ: The Holy Spirit and Liturgical Memory in the Thought of Edward J. Kilmartin* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 42.

may go back as far as the time of St. Gregory (d. 604).⁶³

As noted above, the embolism was said silently from about the year 1000. This silent recitation significantly affected its ability to fulfill its purpose; the embolism could no longer elucidate the content of the final petition(s) for the people, nor help prepare them for communion. Liturgical abuses and confusion developed.

During the late Middle Ages, the embolism often became separated from the Lord's Prayer by devotional activity, such as genuflecting to the blessed sacrament, kneeling before relics or crucifixes placed in front of the altar, or the insertion of other prayers.⁶⁴ The embolism was one of three periods of silence during the mass, and these three days of silence were interpreted analogically as representing Christ's three days in the tomb. The canon and the Lord's Prayer together were interpreted as reliving the passion; the commingling was the point where the commemoration of the resurrection was thought to begin.⁶⁵ Trent in some ways did represent a restoration and a purification of liturgical abuses, and one of these corrections included the reconnection of the embolism to the Lord's Prayer. However, it continued to be said in silence by the presider.

In Byzantine liturgy, there is no embolism, but in the other Eastern churches, the embolism takes up the final two petitions.⁶⁶ In surveying extant embolisms, we often see an elaborate plea that God, recognizing our feebleness and our unworthiness, not lead

⁶³ Robert Cabié, *The Eucharist*, vol. II, *The Church at Prayer*, ed. A. G. Martimort, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 109.

⁶⁴ Jungmann, 290-292. For example, according to a 1040 rule, a crucifix, Gospel book and relics should be placed before the altar after the Lord's Prayer, and the clergy are to throw themselves on the floor and recite Psalm 73. Similar rules called for the recitation of Psalm 78 or 121, and some instructed the celebrating priest to kneel before the Blessed Sacrament. This practice began after the embolism but gradually migrated to be inserted between the body of the Lord's Prayer and the embolism. ⁶⁵ Jungmann, 289-290.

⁶⁶ Dalmais provides examples of Armenian, East Syrian, Egyptian, Coptic, Syrian and Maronite embolisms which all take up these final two petitions. See Dalmais, 94-96.

us into temptation, but protect us from evil. Some extend the concept, asking God to protect us from evil, and from all those who act under the influence of evil. There is a profound recognition of our inability to resist temptation, and a humble appeal to God to not put us to that test. These pleas are often accompanied by reminders to God that we are humble servants who praise and glorify God's name. The pleas suggest a confident belief that God will be faithful and will protect us. The common feature in all the extant Eastern embolisms is that they all develop the last two petitions, asking that God lead us not into temptation, but keep us from evil. In the West, it becomes more common to expand only on the final embolism. All the embolisms draw attention to the human incapacity to avoid evil without God's help. We need God's mercy, God's help, to remain free from sin.

Vatican II seemed to recognize the importance of the embolism, as catechetical clarification of a potentially puzzling petition, as reaffirmation of our plea for the peace that only God can give, and as transition toward the doxology, the praise that we naturally want to offer to God our loving parent. In our current sacramentary, the embolism has been shortened and enriched. It is once again said aloud, so that it can benefit all with its clarification of the final petition. It has been streamlined; we no longer invoke Mary and certain apostles. There are no distracting motions with the paten. The new hopeful ending is added, derived from Titus 2:13: "as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ." This provides a transition to the Eastern-style doxology, "For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever."⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Lawrence J. Johnson, *The Mystery of Faith: A Study of the Structural Elements of the Order of the Mass* (Washington, DC: Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, 1999), 101.

Development of the Doxology

As early as the Didache, in the second century, we already see evidence of a form of doxology appended to the end of the Lord's Prayer: "For to you belongs the power and the glory."68 Unlike our current doxology, the 'kingdom' was not yet part of the formula. This doxology appears to be common throughout the Church in Syria and Palestine, and does not appear dependent on liturgical context. Several early manuscripts of Matthew's gospel already contain doxologies. Even when the Lord's Prayer was prayed as part of one's private prayers, this doxology was included.⁶⁹ In some later manuscripts of Matthew's gospel, the doxology is already included as part of the gospel text. Despite this early origin, the doxology was not part of the eucharistic tradition in the West until Vatican II. Jeremias suggests that the lack of an early doxology does not suggest that Jesus intended the prayer to be prayed without a note of praise at the end; it is possible that the doxology was originally added extemporaneously.⁷⁰ Restoring a more explicit note of praise allows the prayer to end on a positive note, and provides an excellent transition to the communion rite that is to follow.

Theological rationale for the Lord's Prayer

Tertullian described the Lord's Prayer as breviarium totius evangelii, or 'a summary of the whole gospel.⁷¹ Indeed it does capture a wealth of concepts in a very concise format. Before we receive communion, before we experience this intimate encounter with God and one another as we join in sharing the Body & Blood of Christ, we reaffirm our identity as a people privileged to call God "Father." We reiterate our desire for the

⁶⁸ Didache VIII, 2, quoted in Dalmais, 92.
⁶⁹ Dalmais, 92.
⁷⁰ Jeremias, 91.

⁷¹ Tertullian, *De oratione* 1, cited in Hamman, 41.

salvation of the universe, for the fulfillment of God's will, for the imminent coming of the reign of God in its fullness. We acknowledge the sin in our lives and in our world, and we express our desire for conversion, as we seek to be united with Christ in doing the will of the Father. We reiterate our desire for the bread of life, and we place our trust in God. Until the kingdom is fulfilled, we pray for God's deliverance from the times of trial in our lives and God's mercy on the final Day of Judgment. We remind ourselves of our responsibilities as children of God to care for one another and to represent God to those around us. In some respects, this prayer re-enacts in miniature the mass to this point, especially the penitential rite and the eucharistic prayer. We are acknowledging our need for God's help in order to experience peace and freedom from sin.

There is a dimension to the Lord's Prayer that calls upon us to broaden our horizons. When we pray for our daily bread for the morrow, or when we pray for the endless mercy of God, we shift our focus away from our more private needs to consider the needs of the universe. In one of Jesus' supposed lost sayings, preserved by Clement of Alexandria, Jesus is purported to have said, "Ask ye for the great things, so will God grant you the little things."⁷² This seems like a valuable dimension to keep in mind as we begin the communion rite. Our focus is not on our own individual needs or desires; our focus is communal and universal as we pray for the needs of the whole Body of Christ. The "we" or "our" language of the prayer is likewise significant. Uniting our prayers to the prayers of the Church from Jesus' day to our own, we focus on the eschatological fulfillment of the kingdom in our own day. This puts us in a most appropriate mindset as we prepare to receive communion.

72 Jeremias, 100.

The Position of the Lord's Prayer within the Mass

The Lord's Prayer's position before or after the fraction rite has varied. While the East maintained the position of the Lord's Prayer after the fraction rite with a close connection therefore to the actual reception of communion, Pope Gregory the Great moved it in the West to precede the fraction rite, making it appear as almost an extension to the eucharistic prayer itself.⁷³ Since he had observed that both the eucharistic prayer and the Lord's Prayer were said by the presider in persona Christi, it made some sense to join them together, so that the assembly could listen to both of the pravers that Christ was reciting to his Father.74

However, by moving the Lord's Prayer to precede the fraction rite, Gregory moved it further from the actual reception of communion. We have seen earlier that the Lord's Prayer offers an ideal preparation for communion.

Moreover, the current order skews the interrelationship between the sign of peace and the Lord's Prayer. Currently, we pray the Lord's Prayer, then we exchange a sign of peace, then the bread is broken while the Lamb of God is sung. If we moved the Lord's Prayer to follow the breaking of the bread, restoring the order that existed prior to Gregory's reforms, two advantages could be seen. First, the Lord's Prayer would be more proximate to the reception of communion. Secondly, the Lord's Prayer would once again follow the sign of peace. The sign of peace reflects and symbolizes the peace of Christ, the peace that only God can give. Having thus symbolized our reconciliation and our peace with other members of the Body of Christ, we would then be in a suitable frame of mind to pray the Lord's Prayer. If we are going to genuinely

⁷³ Jungmann, 278-279. ⁷⁴ Dalmais, 93.

pray that God "forgive us our debts as we also have our debtors" (Matt. 6:12), we need to demonstrate a sign of reconciliation, a sign of peace, with one another before we can pray this prayer.

The ideal position of the sign of peace can be debated, but it should precede the Lord's Prayer. Historically, it has come earlier in the mass, after the readings and prayers, i.e. after the general intercessions, as a means of sealing the prayers that preceded it.⁷⁵ Matt 5:23-24 ("So, when you are offering your gift at the altar...") was used by way of explanation for this position, coming after the general intercessions and prior to the presentation of gifts at the altar.⁷⁶ Innocent I in 416 insisted that the sign of peace should be delayed until after the completion of the eucharistic prayer, so that it could serve as an assent to all that had gone before. At this point, it would still have preceded the Lord's Prayer; it was not until almost two centuries later that Gregory the Great repositioned the Lord's Prayer to follow immediately after the canon, placing it prior to the sign of peace.⁷⁷

It is important that the Lord's Prayer follow the fraction rite because it is our preparation for communion par excellence, so it should be located as close as possible to the actual reception of communion. By moving it after the fraction rite and after the sign of peace, an ancient tradition would be restored and the Lord's Prayer could function more effectively as preparation for communion. Vatican II made significant improvements to the treatment of the Lord's Prayer during our eucharistic liturgy. It is

⁷⁵ Jungmann, 322. ⁷⁶ Cabié, 114.

77 Ibid.

unfortunate that they did not go further and also address the location of this prayer.⁷⁸ Concluding comments

The Lord's Prayer sheds valuable insight on our role as a eucharistic people. The Eucharist is a privilege shared by the baptized, by those who call God Abba. Before receiving communion, we take time to praise our God. We seek to enter into the paschal mystery in order to hallow God's name and do God's will. The Eucharist provides us with a foretaste of the reign of God, when we will all share in the heavenly banquet. It also satisfies our present-day needs as we grow together through this sharing and as we nourish and support one another. The communion that we share unites us throughout the earth, throughout time and throughout the universe, as angels and archangels join our hymn of praise. We acknowledge our total indebtedness to God for all that we are, and we recognize that the gifts we receive in the Eucharist are given by the grace of God, not through any merit of our own. We seek to purify our hearts in order to enter into this experience most fully, and we ask God to lift our hearts, to lift our focus away from the hurts of this world to allow us to focus on the gifts of God. We are nourished by this experience, and we seek to honour the gifts we have been given by going forth to care for God's world. We are mandated to go forth to share this experience, to hallow God's name and to resist evil wherever we find it. The Lord's Prayer is the ideal prayer for a eucharistic people.

⁷⁸ The position of the Lord's Prayer within the communion rite does not appear to have been raised as a significant topic for discussion. For example, it is not mentioned at all in Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy: 1948-1975*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990).

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