

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

The BCP teach (in the Ministration to the Sick) that if one is prevented from receiving even both the physical elements of the Sacrament, one is not prevented from receiving what God offers us in Communion:

“If a person desires to receive the Sacrament, but, by reason of extreme sickness or physical disability, is unable to eat and drink the Bread and Wine, the Celebrant is to assure that person that all the benefits of Communion are received, even though the Sacrament is not received with the mouth.” (BCP 457)

The following prayers can be said, either at home, or at church, if one is unable to receive both of the elements of the Sacraments.

Remember also the Church’s teaching in the doctrine of concomitance. This teaching is that the whole Christ is present in every particle of both the bread and wine. Otherwise, it would mean that if one receives more bread or wine (or more of both, as the priest usually does) one would receive more of the Lord, which is clearly absurd (and impossible!). This is an important fact to keep in mind when illness of any sort (whether short or long-term) keeps us from receiving one of the Elements. Regardless of whether we receive a large or small amount, in one kind or in both, or even without the elements, but only by desire—one always receives the fullness of the Sacrament.

I

O my most loving Saviour, since I cannot have the happiness of receiving thee this day, suffer me to gather up the crumbs under thy table, and to unite myself to thy divine Heart by faith, hope and charity.

I confess that I do not deserve the children’s bread, but I venture humbly to declare that away from thee my soul is dried up for thirst, and my heart cast down with faintness.

Come, then unto me, O my divine Jesus, come into my mind to illuminate it with thy light; come into my heart to enkindle in it the fire of thy love, and to unite it so ultimately with thine own that it may be no more I that live but thou that livest in me, and reignest in me for ever. Amen.

II

O eternal Father, look here upon thy beloved Son in whom thou art well pleased, and turn away thy face from my sins; for he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and with his stripes we are healed.

With the publican would I smite my breast in deepest sorrow for those sins which drew down on him such heavy punishment. For his sake be merciful to me a sinner. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, who by thy death hast given life unto the world, deliver me from all my sins, and keep me from evil. Make me to abide always in thy commandments, and never suffer me to be separated from thee, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.

Hear me, O Lord Jesu, who sittest on high with the Father, and art here invisibly present with us, and since I cannot now receive thee sacramentally, enter spiritually into my soul, cleanse it from its sins and imperfections . . . adorn it with heavenly gifts and graces . . . and make me worthy with all thy people to partake of thy spotless Body and precious Blood. Amen.

III

O my sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ, thou art my Sovereign Good, the Fountain of all good, my God and my all. I most firmly believe that for us sinners and for our salvation thou was pleased to come down from heaven, to take upon thee, by the mystery of thine Incarnation, our human nature, and to become one of us, that so thou mightest be our High Priest and our Victim. I most firmly believe that thou offeredst thyself upon the cross a sacrifice for us all, after having suffered many cruel torments; and that, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, thou hast opened the gates of heaven for us. I most firmly believe that in these sacred mysteries thou art truly and really present, and that thy sacred Body and Blood are here presented in sacrifice, and verily and indeed received by the faithful in remembrance of thy death.

O how happy are those souls who worthily receive thee in this divine sacrament. O what grace, what sanctity, do they receive from this fountain of all sanctity. O merciful Saviour, have compassion on me, and suffer me at least to sigh after thee, and, though I am unworthy of thine embraces, permit me, like the penitent Magdalene, to present myself at least before thy feet, and wash them in spirit with my tears. O may thy sacred Blood, which thou hast shed for all sinners, cleanse my sinful soul this day from all its guilt.

O come to me, dear Lord, in spirit, and take possession of all the powers of my soul. Enlighten mine understanding, and inflame my will with thy love. O let me be thine and be thou mine from henceforth and for ever; and grant that nothing, in life or death, may ever separate me from thee any more. In this one prayer hear me, O Lord, and in all things else do with me as thou wilt. Amen.

IV

In union, O dear Lord, with the faithful at every altar of thy Church [*especially at . . .*] where thy death and passion are pleaded before the Father, I desire to offer thee praise and thanksgiving; I present unto thee my soul and body with the earnest wish that I may be ever united to thee. And since I cannot now receive thee sacramentally, I beseech thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to thee with all the affections of my soul. O let nothing ever separate me from thee, let me live and die in thy love. Amen.

God our Father, whose Son our Lord Jesus Christ in a wonderful Sacrament hath left unto us a memorial of his passion: Grant us so to venerate the sacred mysteries of his Body and Blood, that we may ever perceive within ourselves the fruit of his redemption; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, p. 201).