

A Great Thanksgiving

based on *The Apostolic Tradition* attributed to Hippolytus

In 1993, the then Liturgical Commission included a number of Great Thanksgiving prayers in the trial-use 'beige booklet' of Holy Communion services prepared in the lead-up to APBA. One was based on the most ancient known full text, attributed to Hippolytus (c.200), from a fresh translation by the Revd Dr Evan Burge.

This Thanksgiving was included for two principal reasons: its lineage, preceding the controversies surrounding eucharistic doctrine and practice in the ninth, sixteenth and recent centuries; and its bold imagery, reflecting the 'classic' motif of God's atoning victory wrought in Christ over sin, evil and death.

In the light of responses received during the Consultations conducted around Australia, and correspondence, a revision of this text was included in the white Draft Book submitted to the General Synod in 1995, as Great Thanksgiving 3. At the Synod, a further Great Thanksgiving prayer was drafted during the course of the meeting. Without clear reason beyond the desire to have no more than five such Thanksgivings, the newly-minted prayer replaced the Hippolytus text, though the latter had received general approval.

The Liturgy Commission, apprised of requests for further forms of the Great Thanksgiving, issues the version based on Hippolytus submitted to the 1995 General Synod, believing that the retrieval of an ancient text for contemporary use will assist the praise of God by Australian Anglicans.

[The Lord be with you.

And also with you.]

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks and praise, almighty God,
through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,
our Saviour and Redeemer.

He is your living Word,
through whom you have created all things.

You sent him from heaven to take our flesh:
born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
he was revealed as your Son.

He lived and died as one of us,
to reconcile us to you,
the God and Father of all.

In fulfilment of your will
he stretched out his hands in suffering,
to bring release to those who place their hope in you;
and so he won for you a holy people.

He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows,
and to give up his life on the cross,
that he might break the chains of evil and death,
and banish the darkness of sin and despair.

By his resurrection
he brings us into the light of your presence.

Now with all creation we raise our voices
to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.]

Holy and gracious God, accept our sacrifice of praise,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ;
who on the night he was handed over
to suffering and death,
took bread and gave you thanks,
saying to his disciples, 'Take, and eat:
this is my body which will be given for you.'

In the same way he took the cup,
saying, 'This is my blood which will be shed for you.
When you do this, you do it in memory of me.'

In remembrance of his death and resurrection,
with this bread and this cup,
we give you thanks that you have counted us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send your Holy Spirit
upon the celebration of your Church:
gather into one all who share in these holy mysteries,
filling them with your Spirit
and confirming them in the truth,
that together we may praise you and give you glory
through Jesus your servant.

All glory and honour are yours,
Father and Son, with the Holy Spirit
in the holy Church,
now and for ever.

Amen.