

GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER OF GREGORY OF NYSSA

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Presider

It is right to give you thanks, God of infinite love.
In the darkness that was before all things,
you spoke and light sprang into being,
filling the whole creation with your goodness.
Forming us from the dust of the earth
and breathing your Spirit into us
we became living creatures,
made to love and serve you and one another.

But we would not follow your call
to walk in love, and so wandered
in the wilderness of our broken desire.
And then your light broke upon us
to guide us to the truth.
You sent Moses, your friend,
to bear your law from the mountaintop
and promised to write it upon our hearts.

You came to us through
prophets and strangers,
through women of courage
and men of compassion,
through children and outcasts.
And even then we turned from your light
and wandered in darkness.

So you came to us once more in your beloved son.
He was one with you in glory,
yet chose to abide with us in flesh.
As once you spoke to us in the burning bush,
now you spoke in this child of Mary.
He drew us near to him and to you,
showing us the fullness of your love.
He bore our humanity to the fullest,
even tasting death for our sake.

But your light could not be dimmed.
He broke free of the tomb,
and trampling death beneath his feet
carried our human flesh to your presence,
making us one with you as we were in creation.

And even now our Bridegroom
has not been taken from us.
He stands in our midst,
though we see him not.
Gathered with him at our
wedding banquet, we bring these gifts.
Make them holy by your Spirit
to be for all people the
Body and Blood of your Son.

On the dark night of his betrayal
Jesus took bread,
blessed and broke it,
and gave it to his friends saying:

“Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper, he took the cup of wine,
said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said:

“Drink this, all of you:
this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood,
poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Remembering Christ's death and resurrection
we offer this bread and cup to you.
We celebrate his risen life bounding up in us.
And with our hearts and minds
enlightened by your presence,
we praise you and we bless you:

People *We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you Lord our God.*

Presider Remember your people,
scattered to the corners of the earth.
As grain was scattered
on the earth and made one
in this bread,
so may we be brought together
at last in the kingdom of your love;
where with your beloved Gregory,
with Mary, Jesus' mother,
and with all the saints
we may join in the triumphal song:

All *Holy, holy, holy...*