

The Third Edition of the Roman Missal

The *Gloria*

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* describes the *Gloria* as “a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb” (no. 53). The *Gloria* is, above all, a proclamation of our praise of God.

Much of the text of the *Gloria* comes from Scripture: the first lines are derived from the Angels heralding the glad tidings of Christ’s birth in Luke 2:14 – “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” The opening words (“Glory to God in the highest”) also correspond to the Latin, “*Gloria in excelsis Deo*” – a phrase universally familiar from the popular Christmas carol, “Angels We Have Heard on High.”

There are clearly substantial differences between the updated liturgical text and the *Gloria* translation that we have been using. The current text reads, “peace to his people on earth,” which the new text expands to “**on earth peace to people of good will.**” The new translation of the *Gloria* is a richer reference to the fact that the Messiah’s coming brings the world a higher order of divine peace that only the incarnate Son of God can bestow. Those who live in accordance with God’s will and receive His grace shall experience the fullness of this peace.

Turning to the second sentence of the new *Gloria*, we notice something striking – the new translation recovers entire phrases that were left out of the current translation. Right now, we sing, “we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.” However, the Latin text of the hymn offers five successive ways in which we should pay homage to God: “**We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory.**” Not only do we “praise” the Lord, but we also *bless* the Lord! Not only do we “bless,” but we also “adore” him! Not only do we *adore*, but we also “glorify” him.

The words “**Only Begotten Son ... Son of the Father**” represent a slight change from the previous version, “only Son of the Father.” Though these are different words, they express the same dogma, namely that Jesus is the only Son of God and they recover a key phrase from the Latin text – “*Fili Unigenite*”; a venerable title of Jesus Christ, which speaks of the fact that the Son of God comes forth from the Father, yet is no less an eternal Person of the Divine Trinity.

Unlike our current translation, the new text includes two lines (rather than one) that begin with “you take away the sins of the world.” By regaining this line and an additional “have mercy on us” in the next line, the new translation features a classic threefold structure of supplication: “have mercy on us... receive our prayer... have mercy on us.” Currently, we sing about “sin” in the singular, but the new translation has “sins” in the plural as does the Latin text. The change reinforces that Jesus takes away not just generic sin from the world, but also forgives people their personal sins.

Current Version

Glory to God in the highest,
and **peace to his people on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the **sin** of the world: have
mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the
Father: **receive our prayer.**

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Updated Version

Glory to God in the highest,
and **on earth peace to people of good will.**

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you,
we glorify you, we give you thanks **for your**
great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, **O God,**
almighty Father.

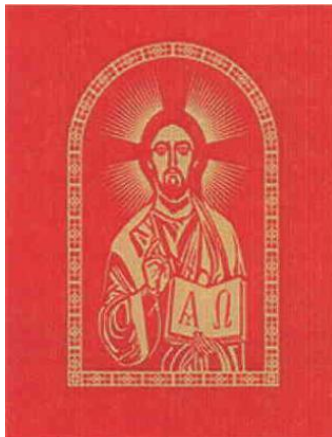
Lord Jesus Christ,
Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, **Son of the Father,**

you take away the **sins** of the world, have
mercy on us; **you take away the sins of the**
world, receive our prayer;

you are seated at the right hand of the
Father, **have mercy on us.**

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The revised translation of the Gloria reflects the long tradition of this hymn. It roots us in the scriptures, give us words to praise God, and is an occasion to reflect on the forgiving power of Jesus.



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