



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?

By Father Peter Daly

## Why Do Catholics Say the Protestant Ending to the Lord's Prayer?

Several years ago, I read that Catholics say the Lord's Prayer the way we do because that is how it is written in the oldest version of the Bible.

It was believed that the version the Protestants say was the result of a monk transcribing a note from the margin of a page and adding it to the end of the Lord's Prayer, because he thought it had been left out.

Now Catholics are adding the "for thine is the kingdom, etc." shortly after the Lord's Prayer at Mass. I have also been to a Baptism and two funerals and a Sunday Mass in three different states in which the priest led us in the Lord's Prayer and used the Protestant version, that is, adding "for thine is the kingdom" immediately after the prayer.

My question is this: Why are we saying the Protestant ending to the Lord's Prayer at Mass, even if it is not

said as part of the Lord's Prayer? Why are some priests actually saying the Protestant version of the Lord's Prayer? Have we been wrong all these centuries?

R. D.

This is one of those questions where everybody is a little bit right. There are two versions of the Lord's Prayer in the Bible, one in Matthew (6:9-13) and one in Luke (11:2-4). It is Matthew's version that both Catholics and Protestants recite.

You are right about the origins of the phrase, "for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen." This addition, known as a "doxology" or "praise" of God (from the Greek *doxia*, or praise), was not found in the most ancient copies of Scripture, though it is found in an early catechism known as the *Didache*.

It was probably added by an overzealous scribe who thought it had been left out of the prayer, since he was used to hearing it recited at Mass.

The phrase was probably added to the recitation of the Lord's Prayer at public liturgies following the ancient Jewish custom of adding a doxology to the end of prayers and psalms.

"It was normal in Judaism," *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* says, "to conclude prayers with a formal doxology and the early Christian communities often followed the Jewish practice. The doxology however, is not found in the most reliable manuscripts. It has been used in the Protestant churches. It is sheer accident that it did not appear in the Greek manuscripts that Jerome used in translating the Vulgate (ancient and official Catholic) version of the Bible."

Monks, priests, and nuns today continue the practice of adding a doxology in of the Liturgy of the Hours. At the end of each psalm or canticle, we add a "Glory be," which is not found in the Scriptures but is part of the Liturgy of the Hours.

When the Bible was translated into English, the King James Version included "for thine is the kingdom, etc." in the Lord's Prayer. Since this was used by most English-speaking Protestants, most of

the English-speaking world accepted the doxology as part of the words that Jesus had given us.

More recent and more authoritative Protestant Bibles have corrected this error. Today, many have taken out the phrase or put it into a footnote. The Revised Standard Version, for example, puts it into a footnote.

So, there is no doubt that the doxology was *not* in the early manuscripts. There is also no doubt that it was recited by the earliest Christians in the liturgy, as it is recited again today after the prayer of the priest, which in Latin is called the *Liberamus* or "Deliver us."

Probably the priests who were celebrating the Baptisms and funerals you mentioned were trying to be accommodating to Protestants who were present. It doesn't hurt to add the phrase if it makes them feel included. It never hurts to praise God. But I don't think that we are likely to officially adopt the Protestant version.

Readers are invited to ask questions about Church topics which confuse or puzzle them or about subjects on which they wish to learn more. It would help if you would tell us something about yourself. If your question is chosen by Father Peter Daly, you will receive a two-year subscription to *Catholic Digest* with the compliments of the editors. Write *Catholic Digest*, 185 Willow

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