

The Sacrifice of Praise

Michael Joncas

INTRO *Stately* (♩ = ca. 75)

Organ

mf
Sempre legato

mf

6

REFRAIN: All *f*

One bread — we set be - fore you, —

f

f

12

one cup — we fill with wine: — One

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18

peo-ple at your ta - ble bears the gifts of field and of vine.

24

One voice pro-claims your bless - ings,

29

one heart to you we raise: One peo-ple at your

35

al - tar of - fers sac - ri - fice of praise.

VERSE 1: Tenors and Basses
(Assembly men only, ad lib.)

41

mf

1. How blessed are you, O God, the Mas - ter of all things, for by your

mf
[R.H.]

46

1. boun - ty we have bread, gift of the earth and the

51



1. work of hu-man hands. It will be - come the bread of life. _____

57

REFRAIN
Soprano/Alto unison (Melody)

62 *f*

One bread _____ we set be - fore you, _____ one cup _____

T
B *f* One _____ bread we set be - fore _____ you, one _____

68 *f*

_____ we fill with wine: _____ One _____ peo - ple at your ta - ble _____

A
S
cup we fill with wine: _____ One peo - ple at your ta - ble _____

74

unis.

ble bears the gifts of field and of vine.

79

One voice pro-claims your bless - ings, one heart

One voice pro-claims your bless - ings, one

84

S
A

to you we raise: One peo - ple at your

heart to you we raise:

89

al - tar of - fers sac - ri - fice of praise.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 84-88) features a vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a soprano (S) and alto (A) part. The lyrics are: "to you we raise: One peo - ple at your heart to you we raise:". The piano accompaniment includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The second system (measures 89-93) continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "al - tar of - fers sac - ri - fice of praise.". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and melodic lines. A large, semi-transparent watermark "Preview" is overlaid diagonally across the entire page.

VERSE 2: Sopranos (Melody) and Altos
(Assembly women only, *ad lib.*)

95 *mf* 2. for by your

2. How blessed are you, O God, the Mas - ter of all things, for by your

100 2. boun - ty we have wine, _____

2. boun - ty we have wine, fruit of the vine _____ and the

105 2. It will be - come the cup of life. _____

2. work of hu - man hands. It will be - come _____ the cup of life.

111

REFRAIN

116

f S
Melody A
One _____ bread we set be - fore _____

One bread _____ we set be - fore you, _____

One _____ bread we set be - fore _____

T
Melody B
f One bread _____ we set be - fore you, _____

f

120

you, one cup we fill with wine:

one cup we fill with wine:

you, one cup we fill with wine:

one cup we fill with wine:

125

One peo - ple at your ta - ble bears the gifts of

130

field and of vine.

One voice pro-claims your

One voice pro-claims your

One voice pro-claims your

135

bless - ings, one heart to you we raise:

bless - ings, one heart to you we raise:

bless - ings, one heart to you we raise:

141

One peo-ple at your al-tar of-fers sac-ri-fice of praise.

VERSE 3: Choir alone

148

S *mp*

3. How blessed are you, O Mas-ter of all things,

A/Melody *mf*

3. How blessed are you, O Fa-ther, Mas-ter of all things, for by your

T *mp*

B

3. How blessed are you, O Mas-ter of all things,

mf [R.H.]

154

3. ___ for from this ta - ble we re - ceive ___

3. boun - ty we re - ceive ___ the liv - ing pre - sence of our

3. ___ for from this ta - ble ___ we re - ceive

159

3. our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ, dwell - ing in our hearts. ___

3. Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ, his Spir - it dwell - ing in our hearts. ___

3. our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ, dwell - ing in our hearts. ___

165

REFRAIN: All

Melody

171 *f*

One bread _____ we set be - fore you, _____ one cup _____ we fill with

f S
A
One _____ bread. _____
T
f B

177

wine: _____ One peo - ple at your ta - ble _____ bears the

One _____ cup. _____ One _____ peo - ple

This musical system contains six staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second and third staves are a piano accompaniment. The fourth and fifth staves are a grand piano accompaniment. The bottom staff is a bass line. A large 'DRAFT' watermark is visible across the score.

183

gifts of field _____ and of vine. _____ One voice _____

bear - ing gifts of field and vine.

This musical system contains six staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second and third staves are a piano accompaniment. The fourth and fifth staves are a grand piano accompaniment. The bottom staff is a bass line. A large 'DRAFT' watermark is visible across the score.

188

pro - claims your bless - ings, _____ one heart _____ to you we

One _____ voice. _____

193

raise: _____ One peo - ple at your al - tar _____

One _____ heart we _____ raise. _____ One

ff *f* *ff* *f*

198

of - fers sac - ri - fice of praise.

peo - ple of - fers sac - ri - fice of praise.

div.

203

mf

208

Composer Notes

Circumstances of composition: I composed “The Sacrifice of Praise” for the wedding of Kristine Looney and Michael Lawrence, at the request of the mother of one of my students in the University of Notre Dame’s SummerSong program. The piece was performed as part of their wedding celebration on 12 May 2007 at Saint Mary Catholic Church in Alexandria, Virginia. In the intervening time since the wedding, I have simplified the composition and rearranged it for SATB choir, feeling that this would make it more available for other ritual uses.

Textual issues: The text acknowledges the complexity of Catholic teaching on the many meanings and functions of the Eucharist. In the years since the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), we have witnessed an unfortunate division among Catholics. Some primarily think of the Eucharist as a meal, emphasizing the dynamics of group identity, cohesion, and commitment arising from its celebration, while others primarily think of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, emphasize the need for contemplative appropriation of this divine gift. In reality, there is no need for Catholics to choose one or the other: the Eucharist is a sacrificial meal whose dynamics cannot be exhausted by this simple categorization.

This song’s refrain acknowledges that the one bread and one cup at the Lord’s table is also the sacrifice of praise offered by the Church at the eucharistic altar in union with the sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross. The verses re-phrase the Christian *berakoth* prayers proclaimed by the celebrating priest over the bread and wine at the preparation of the gifts, while adding a final Trinitarian verse blessing God the Father for gift of the Eucharist which allows the Christian community to experience the Real Presence of Christ and be transformed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Musical issues: “The Sacrifice of Praise” employs a simple refrain/verse structure and may be sung in unison by the assembly throughout (possibly with men singing the first verse, women the second, and the entire assembly the third). It can be proclaimed with the assembly on the refrain while a cantor (or *schola*) takes the verses, both with organ accompaniment. However, more festive occasions could employ SATB choral parts adorning the assembly’s singing (although in this arrangement, verse three should be sung by choir alone). Care should be taken that the climax of this piece does not overshadow the eucharistic prayer that is to follow.

Ritual issues: Although it might be used with catechumens or the elect to reflect on the multiple meanings of the eucharistic celebration, “The Sacrifice of Praise” is really intended to accompany the rituals of preparing the altar and presenting and preparing the gifts of bread and wine according to the prescriptions of the ordinary form of the Roman Rite. If possible, the verses should correlate with the ritual action, verse one being sung as the bread is brought forward, verse two as the wine is brought forward, and verse three during the incensation of the altar and gifts.

—Michael Joncas

Assembly Edition

THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

Michael Joncas

Refrain



Verses

1. How blessed are you, O God, the Mas - ter of all things,
 2. How blessed are you, O God, the Mas - ter of all things,
 3. How blessed are you, O Fa - ther, Mas - ter of all things,

1. for by your boun-ty we have bread, gift of the
 2. for by your boun-ty we have wine, fruit of the
 3. for by your boun-ty we re - ceive the liv - ing

1. earth — and the work of hu - man hands. It will be -
 2. vine — and the work of hu - man hands. It will be -
 3. pre - sence of our Sa - vior, Je - sus Christ, his Spir - it

6 to Refrain

1. come the bread of life.
 2. come the cup of life.
 3. dwell - ing in our hearts.

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