

Thy Kingdom Come and Thy Will Be Done - The Universal English Prayer

By Rick McKikney, 2026

It is noteworthy that in almost all Christian worship services in the English speaking world there is a recitation of what is called “The Lord’s Prayer” or “The Our Father” taken from Matthew 6:9-13 which uses the Old English words “art” (as is “who art in heaven”) and “thy” (as in “hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done”). The Old English was of course used in the Catholic Douay-Rheims translation of the Bible from the Latin Vulgate in 1582 and in the Protestant King James translation from the Byzantine Greek version of the Bible in 1611. Most all modern versions use “is in heaven” or “in heaven” and “hallowed be your name, your kingdom come your will be done.” However, popular usage is such that almost everyone uses the “thy” version in both personal prayer and liturgical worship, and it is generally what we teach our children.

Of course, the King James version has a closing doxology, which it also took from the Byzantine Greek version with, “for thine is the kingdom the power and the glory forever. Amen” St. Jerome in translating the Latin Vulgate generally used earlier versions of the scriptures which did not include the doxology, especially the Alexandrian Greek version. This is why modern translations generally do not use the doxology. However, in the Liturgy of the Eucharist employed today in Catholic masses, the doxology is and has always been included after an additional brief prayer said by the presider, as in. “For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.”

The doxology is believed to have part of the liturgy from the earliest times and is thought to have been taken from Chapter 9 of the Didache (100 A.D.) stating, “Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever, “ or from 1 Chronicles 29:11, which states. “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.”

Interestingly, when Matthew 6:9-13 is read as part the Gospel at a Catholic Mass, it too uses the words “art” and “thy” even though the Catholic Lectionary is suppose to follow modern translations such as the New American Revised Version.