

# Roman Missal, 3rd Edition

## Looking at the text 6

**H**oly, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

### Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts

*What do angels do?*

We might think of Gabriel visiting Mary at Nazareth or be aware of guardian angels. The prophet Isaiah had a vision of the angels worshipping God chanting 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts (Chapter 6 verses 1-3). We repeat this at Mass to show that our worship is united to this heavenly praise. To remind us of this the priest ends the Preface with words such as 'with the Angels and all the Saints we proclaim your glory, as with one voice we sing...'

And we are joined not only to the worship of angels. Jesus offered to his Father a perfect sacrifice of loving obedience, the most perfect act of worship possible. The heart of the worship of heaven is Jesus' sacrifice of praise. Every Mass unites us to his offering.

The new translation replaces 'power and might' by 'hosts'. It is closer to the passage in Isaiah and to the Latin Missal where the word used means the heavenly army. There is more to it than being accurate. 'Power and might' means not just any kind of strength or power, such as nuclear, electric or mechanical power. It is God's power found above all, in people, all those who worship and serve him.



In heaven, the angels and saints worship God and here on earth we join with them in the sacrifice of praise. We are part of a great host or army of servants, who do not seek to dominate or intimidate but who join together in love, worship and praise. In singing or saying the Holy, holy we remember that we are united to the living and the dead, a great multitude throughout history and beyond.

**Q** *Why does the Church recommend that we sing the holy, holy whenever we can?  
Think about the sacrifices that people make in their daily lives for others.  
Think about this idea of our being united with the living and the dead at Mass.  
Can this help us in times of joy and sorrow?*

It is thought that Jews at the time of Jesus and later the early Christians used this prayer in daily worship because they knew that all our prayer comes before God in heaven. All that we say is special to him. As time passed we started using these words in Mass but we can also pray the Holy, holy regularly as a prayer in itself.

*What do angels do? What do Christians do?*

Both are messengers of Good News, who look after others, worshippers of God. We have a lot in common with angels.

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