



Apollo11, Sea of Tranquility, 20 July 1969, frames A11-40-5872 and A11-40-5874 : Buzz Aldrin is shown deploying the Solar Wind Collector and saluting the U.S. Flag

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. 2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. 3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. 5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. 7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. 12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. 13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. 15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. (Psalm 139:1-16)

I pray readers of this devotion are devout Christian believers who share in the blessed sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion). I wonder if those of sufficient longevity of years can remember where they were on the afternoon of 20 July of 1969. If you do remember, you may have been at work, at the golf course, or simply lounging by the pool; or you may have been at a church worship service to partake of the Lord's Supper. But odds are certain that you were not at the particular Communion Service that is the subject of this devotion – on the Sea of Tranquility. Though the Thirty-Nine Articles do not allow for 'reserved Communion,' I believe that the Holy Spirit would allow for a 'field expediency' of the use of reserved Communion in this particular case.

The Sea of Tranquility is a quite lonely place unlike any comparable place on earth. It is a place to which few people have had either the courage, or ability, to travel. And the cost of a few hours, much less days, would be prohibitive even if booking through [Expedia.com](https://www.expedia.com)! You see, the Sea of Tranquility was, at the time of this Communion Service, 235,000 miles from earth – on the Moon! It was the Christian Faith that opened man's intellect to the point that such a voyage was possible, and it follows in natural order that a Christian Sacrament should be the first to be observed on the Lunar surface.

No other religious faith can claim such an honor! In fact, NASA tried to keep the matter secret for decades. But now the issue has been made public, and we can praise God for His great goodness and mercy in revealing the fact to us. We need not replace our Cross of Christ on the Lord's Table or the Church steeple with a replica of the Moon; for it was the Cross that led us to the Moon by God's grant of wisdom and knowledge. Below is a recounting of the story:

On Sunday July 20, 1969 the first people landed on the moon. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were in the lunar lander which touched down at 3:17 Eastern Standard Time (on the Sea of Tranquility of the Moon).

Buzz Aldrin had with him the Reserved Sacrament. He radioed: *"Houston, this is Eagle. This is the LM pilot speaking. I would like to request a few moments of silence. I would like to invite each person listening in, whoever or wherever he may be, to contemplate for a moment the events of the last few hours, and to give thanks in his own individual way.*

Later he wrote: *"In the radio blackout, I opened the little plastic packages which contained the bread and the wine. I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine slowly curled and gracefully came up the side of the cup. Then I read the Scripture, 'I am the vine, you are the branches. Whosoever abides in me will bring forth much fruit.' I had intended to read my communion passage back to earth, but at the last minute Deke Slayton had requested that I not do this. NASA was already embroiled in a legal battle with Madelyn Murray O'Hare, the celebrated opponent of religion, over the Apollo 8 crew reading from Genesis while orbiting the moon at Christmas. I agreed reluctantly...Eagle's metal body creaked. I ate the tiny Host and swallowed the wine. I gave thanks for the intelligence and Spirit that had brought two young pilots to the Sea of Tranquility. It was interesting for me to think: the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the very first food eaten there, were the communion elements.*

NASA kept this secret for two decades. The memoirs of Buzz Aldrin and the Tom Hanks's Emmy-winning HBO mini-series, *From the Earth to the Moon* (1998), made people aware of this act of Christian worship 235,000 miles from Earth.

The liturgy for that Lunar Communion was an abbreviated text which follows below:

CREATOR of the universe, your dominion extends through the immensity of space: Guide and guard those who seek to fathom its mysteries [especially N.N.]. Save us from arrogance lest we forget that our achievements are grounded in you, and, by the grace of your Holy Spirit, protect our travels beyond the reaches of earth, that we may glory ever more in the wonder of your creation: through Jesus Christ, your Word, by whom all things came to be, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (<http://liturgy.co.nz/first-communion-moon/1203>)

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ – imbues His people with wisdom and knowledge that the children of the world, and of darkness, cannot comprehend. How blessed to know that our God has no void space in His presence – even in the outer reaches of deep space – HE IS THERE!

PRAISE ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. ²The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. ³His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever. ⁴He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. ⁵He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant. ⁶He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. ⁷The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. ⁸They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and

uprightness. 9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever. (Psalm 111:1-10)