

FEDERATION OF DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSIONS [FDLC]
MYSTAGOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE COLLECTS
OF THE *ROMAN MISSAL*



“Collect”ing Our Thoughts – Lent

Artwork: Sebastiano Conca, *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* (1746)

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

FEBRUARY 17, 2013

COLLECT

**Grant, almighty God,
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,
that we may grow in understanding
of the riches hidden in Christ
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**



REFLECTION

This new prayer for the post-Vatican II missal, with roots in the Gelasian Sacramentary, speaks volumes in only a few words. The cyclic nature of our liturgical calendar is not merely meant for time-keeping but for continued growth in faith. Understanding comes over time by our attention to that gradual process of continual conversion.

In the mysteries of the Sacraments and with eyes of faith, we see what is hidden – the treasure of grace that transforms and enables us to live after Christ's example. Our response to that grace already given is our desire for right relationship with God and with one another, a visible testimony that verifies God's continued action in the world.

This week, thousands will give similar testimony to God's grace at work in the lives of those to be called Elect. Just as the word "initiation" implies, election is only the beginning of a lifelong pursuit of deepened conversion and an ongoing, gradual "becoming" into the image and name of Christ. As we begin again our annual Lenten springtime, let us renew our pursuit of that becoming that we may be found worthy of our election by God.

PRAYER

Lord God, deepen our faith this Lent to continue the good work you have begun in us that we may always witness to your saving power and grace.

Submitted by:

Diana Macalintal
Director of Worship
Diocese of San Jose

Artwork: Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Temptation on the Mount* (1308-1311)

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

February 24, 2013

COLLECT

**O God, who have commanded us
to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray,
to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

REFLECTION

Every year on the Second Sunday of Lent we hear the Gospel of the Transfiguration of Jesus. The Collect, inspired by the Transfiguration story, recalls God's command to listen to his beloved Son. Also, we pray that God's word nourishes us inwardly that we might have the ability to see and rejoice in the glory of God.

Sometimes we are blind to the glory of God in our lives and in this world. Sometimes the darkness and sin of our world keeps us from seeing God at work in our lives. Yet, God reveals day after day the immense love and mercy that is available to us through his Son, Jesus Christ.

The season of Lent provides us with the opportunity to listen deeply to God's Word, Jesus Christ, and to call upon God to change us inwardly so that we might see God's glory here on earth and in life eternal.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Word made flesh. Open our ears that we might hear, our eyes that we might see, and our hearts that we might love more deeply and give glory to God with our lives.

Submitted by:

Karen Kane
Director of Worship
Archdiocese of Cincinnati



Artwork: Fra Angelico, *Transfiguration* (1440-42)

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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

March 3, 2013

COLLECT

**O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving
have shown us a remedy for sin,
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,
may always be lifted up by your mercy.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**



REFLECTION

This Collect in the Third Edition of the *Roman Missal* is, in essence, the same prayer as in the previous edition of the missal. This ancient prayer, found in the Gelasian Sacramentary (8th century), was restored to the missal following the Second Vatican Council.

The new translation of this prayer, however, provides fresh insights into the meaning in the text. The praying Church, in the human condition, approaches God with sincere humility. The guilt we carry for our continual lapses into sinfulness is expressed by the poetic image of being “bowed down by our conscience.”

This prayer, however, also contains an extraordinary spirit of hopefulness for humanity. While there have been volumes written on ways to attune our lives to the penitential season, this succinct prescription or “remedy for sin” provides the threefold solution for our transgressions: fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. This text reminds us that it is only in our sure trust in God’s goodness and compassionate treatment of all sinners that we are assured we will be lifted up from our burden of sin.

PRAYER

Lord God, help us to nourish a humble spirit. Keep us mindful of the need for acts of sacrifice in our daily lives in order to bolster our resolve to turn away from sin.

Submitted by:

Judy Bullock, Ed.D.
Director of Worship
Archdiocese of Louisville

Artwork: Duccio di Buinsegna, *Christ and the Samaritan* (1308-11)

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

[*Laetare* Sunday]

March 10, 2013

COLLECT

**O God, who through your Word
reconcile the human race to yourself in a
wonderful way,
grant, we pray,
that with prompt devotion and eager faith
the Christian people may hasten
toward the solemn celebrations to come.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**



REFLECTION

The theme of reconciliation found in the beginning of the Collect has its basis in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 5. Jesus the Word of God reconciles broken humanity to the Father. The second half of the prayer was composed following the Second Vatican Council.

The prayer calls to mind God's wonderful plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus the Word made flesh that God continues the act of reconciling humankind to himself. The second phrase of the prayer petitions God to give us the grace to move with determination toward the Easter celebrations that are drawing closer.

As we mark the mid-point in our Lenten journey, we once again hear God desire that we turn from sin and follow Jesus. God's plan is indeed a wonderful way to experience reconciliation brought about when we enter into life with Jesus, when we die with Christ to become a new creation in him. Reconciliation in Christ is indeed cause for great joy.

PRAYER

Merciful God, inspire in me the desire to live my faith with enthusiasm and determination. Awaken in me the fruits of the Holy Spirit so that my joy may be real and lead others to your loving embrace.

Submitted by:

David J. Reilly
Director of Worship
Diocese of Kalamazoo

Artwork: Palma Giovane, *Return of the Prodigal Son* (1595-1600)

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 17, 2013

COLLECT

**By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God,
may we walk eagerly in that same charity
with which, out of love for the world,
your Son handed himself over to death.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**



REFLECTION

This Collect, as all are, is introduced by the words “Let us pray” and followed by a few moments of silence to allow us to quietly compose our own prayers. These are then gathered or “collected” by the Priest and offered to God through Jesus Christ.

In today’s Collect we ask for help on the journey. Throughout Lent, we have the image of the disciples on the road to Jerusalem, of the pilgrim Church on a journey through the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection.

In the Collect of the Fourth Sunday of Lent, we were asked to walk the journey with eager faith. In this Collect, we ask to walk the journey with eager love. With Jesus as our model, and knowing as he did what awaits us on the other side of pain and suffering, let us ask God’s help to become more deeply united with Christ, to become Christ-like in love, and to love the world as Jesus did.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, may your word penetrate my life. Make me more like you. Turn my doubt into eager love and my hesitant steps into loving actions on behalf of others.

Submitted by:

Catherine Combier-Donovan
[Former] Director of Worship
Archdiocese of Baltimore

Artwork: Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery* (1565)

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

– AT THE MASS

MARCH 24, 2013

COLLECT

**Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human race to follow
caused our Savior to take flesh and submit to the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**



REFLECTION

The Collect on this solemn day of the liturgical year has been in use for the Sunday before Easter dating back at least to the eighth century and the Gelasian Sacramentary. Thus, it has been in use for at least 1200 years in the celebration of the Eucharist.

In the proclamation of the Passion of our Lord, we encounter the suffering that Christ endured for our sake. By this collect, we pray that in our patient suffering we are joined even closer to our Lord in a special way. And more so, through this suffering, we may share in the glory of the Resurrection when all pain will be wiped away.

Whether our pain and suffering is temporary, chronic, or even debilitating, we are graced with the chance to share in a part of the life of Jesus that many take every chance to avoid. However, should we not embrace life in all stages so as to be able to rejoice in the next life where pain and suffering will be wiped away?

PRAYER

Holy Spirit, help me to reach out to those who are no longer able to be present at the Eucharistic table because of illness or old age. Allow me to carry their burden – even if only for a time – when I visit them, pray for them, and care for their needs. And, if I suffer, may I be patient and willing to carry this grace with which I have been gifted, and look forward to sharing resurrected life at the end times.

Submitted by:

Fr. Duane Wachowiak
Pastor and Director of Worship & Liturgical Formation
Diocese of Gaylord

Artwork: Giotto di Bondone, *Scenes from the life of Christ: Entry into Jerusalem* (1304-06)