

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



“Collect”ing Our Thoughts – 22nd-27th Sundays in Ordinary Time

Artwork: Franceschino Zavattari, *Saint Luke with the Cross and the Gospel* (15th century)

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TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 1, 2013

COLLECT

**God of might, giver of every good gift,
put into our hearts the love of your name,
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,
you may nurture in us what is good
and, by your watchful care,
keep safe what you have nurtured.
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 distinguished sacramental theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet based his theology on the notion that God comes to us as free gift. The only response we humans can offer is gratitude for God's gratuitous gift of self.

In this Collect, we prepare to hear God's Word by acclaiming God as the giver of gifts, especially the gift of "love of [God's] name". We pray that God may nurture goodness within us, and keep safe that goodness by "watchful care".

For those who revere and are illumined by the Church's liturgical and sacramental life, it is important to remember that love of God arises not only from what's in our head but, more importantly, from the Spirit who dwells in our heart.

In what ways do we love God's name? What does authentic reverence look like in our life? How do we respond to God's free gift of self in Word and in Sacrament?

PRAYER

Gracious God, grant to us a deepened sense of reverence, so that under your watchful care, we may love your name more fully and respond to you in prayerful gratitude.

Submitted by:

Jeremy Helmes
Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music
St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish
Archdiocese of Cincinnati



Artwork: El Greco, *The Adoration of the Name of Jesus* (1578-1579)

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TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 8, 2013

COLLECT

**O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,
that those who believe in Christ
may receive true freedom
and an everlasting inheritance.
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

In the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, this was one of the evening prayers for the Easter season. In the second edition of the *Roman Missal*, we heard this prayer two other times, also in Easter. With its single appearance now in the liturgical cycle, it coincides with the time of year when many are returning from vacations and going back to school and work. Perhaps the Easter themes of adoption, freedom, and inheritance help to realign our daily concerns in these ordinary times as we return to our ordinary routines.

What gives us true freedom? Too often, our world conditions us to strive above all for the freedom from want, achieved by high grades that lead to the well-paying job, which ultimately results in a secure retirement, all meant to afford us the luxuries of life. Yet this freedom is born out of fear – of not having enough, of not being good enough, of being left behind. This isn't freedom at all but enslavement. True freedom comes only from God who chooses us as his own. No labor of ours can buy that freedom; no personal achievement secures our inheritance. Our response to true freedom is our total submission to Christ.

PRAYER

You alone, O God, free us from fear through your Son Jesus. Bind us to his will that we may work only for the treasure that lasts – a place in your kingdom for ever.

Submitted by:

Diana Macalintal
Director of Worship
Diocese of San Jose

Artwork: James Tissot, *Jesus Travelling* (1886-1894)

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 15, 2013

COLLECT

**Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our heart.
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

“Grant that we may serve you with all our heart.” The Collect reminds us that our God is merciful. It recalls the covenant which was made with the people of Israel, “I am your God and you are my people.”

As children of God, we are called to be not only disciples but also caretakers of all that God has created. As a disciple and a caretaker, Jesus is saying to us, “You are covered by the blood of Christ, therefore you have no reason to be afraid to serve God and care for all of God’s creations.” We know, however, that living in this 21st century with all of its distractions and lack of concerns for one another makes our task of loving and serving God difficult at best. Today’s prayer reminds us that God has the power to change our lives.

PRAYER

Thank you, O God, for recognizing our needs. Thank you for the gift of love through your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for watching over us each and every day. Help us to love you more and help us to see your love in each other.

Submitted by:

Dr. Jessie Thomas
Pastoral Administrator
Holy Name Catholic Church
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

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

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TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 22, 2013

COLLECT

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbor, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life. 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

Although this prayer is partly stitched together with bits of other texts from as early as the sixth century, it is a new Collect for the post-Vatican II missal (see Paul Turner, *Pastoral Companion to the Roman Missal*, © 2010, World Library Publications, p. 144).

I remember only one sermon from my grade school years of the 1950's. It was this short: "Look to those on your right and on your left. Go ahead, do it. Now look to those both in front and behind. (Pause.) If they don't get to heaven, you probably will not either." There was quite a silence in the church as the priest sat down.

Since love is the summary of all law, since love must be more than only of self, then I must love God and must love others. The journey to heaven depends on it. Like our ancestors in faith, we are saved as a people. The question should not only be, "Am I saved?" It must be, "Are we being saved?" The suitable answer, "Every day. We are in this together."

PRAYER

Loving God, instill in me a love so deep and so wide that there is always room for one more, for many more. Fill this pathway to you with lovers and with those to be loved so that heaven will be filled with a great throng that is, best of all, loved by you.

Submitted by:

Eliot Kapitan
Director for Worship and the Catechumenate
Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Artwork: Jan Luyken, *Teachings of Jesus 31 of 40: Parable of the Unjust Steward (Bowyer Bible)* (c. 1623)

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TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 29, 2013

COLLECT

**O God, who manifest your almighty power
above all by pardoning and showing mercy,
bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us
and make those hastening to attain your promises
heirs to the treasures of heaven.
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 has a rich and varied use from the *Gelasian Sacramentary* forward (see Paul Turner, *Pastoral Companion to the Roman Missal*, © 2010, World Library Publications, p. 146). It tells of God's grace, manifested in mercy and pardon. It prompts us to ask: let us be children of the promise, heirs of heaven.

The well known song of John Newton played a part in the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1807. It declares that grace is amazing, is sweet sounding, is saving. Our theology tells us, first, it is a free and undeserved gift. Second, it gives us this list: sanctifying (a share in divine life), actual (a help to conform our lives to God's will), sacramental (proper to each of the Seven Sacraments), and special. These special graces or charisms are given to an individual to be used for the common good of the Church and the world.

Because God gives, and abundantly so, what spiritually given special graces, distinctive gifts (charisms that everyone has as kingdom treasure) must I show, exhibit, manifest, do?

PRAYER

Bountiful God, in you there is no scarcity; only abundance. Let each of us, your daughters and sons, manifest the living presence of your grace in every thought, word, and action.

Submitted by:

Eliot Kapitan
Director for Worship and the Catechumenate
Diocese of Springfield in Illinois



Artwork: James Tissot, *The Poor Lazarus at the Rich Man's Door* (1886-1894)

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TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 6, 2013

COLLECT

**Almighty ever-living God,
who in the abundance of your kindness
surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you,
pour out your mercy upon us
to pardon what conscience dreads
and to give what prayer does not dare to ask.
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 prayer is from the ancient seventh century *Gelasian Sacramentary*. It begins with an eloquent reminder that God's kindness is far beyond our merits and prayers. There is no room for any Pelagian or semi-Pelagian theology (which lead the Church to clarify original sin and divine grace).

What little fruit our efforts have been able to bring about is eclipsed by the mercy of God which is poured upon us. This mercy will also forgive what our conscience fears. We often question our worthiness before God. It is he who assures us of his goodness. And what is more, he will give us what we do not presume to ask. What good news! God, in his mercy, not only forgives our sins, but returns to us the comfort of knowing we are worthy of fellowship with him and all the good things which we may need.

The Entrance Antiphon reminds us that "there is none that can resist your will." And the Communion Antiphon prays that "the Lord is good to those who hope in him, to the soul that seeks him."

PRAYER

God, we trust that your love and mercy is efficacious and never fatiguing. Let us but hope in your goodness to supply all we need.

Submitted by:

Rev. Leon Strieder, SLD
Diocese of Austin
St. Mary's Seminary, Houston, Texas

Artwork: Unknown German Master, *Altarpiece with the Mercy Seat* (1260-1270)

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