

FEDERATION OF DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSIONS [FDLC]
MYSTAGOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION
OF THE *ROMAN MISSAL*



Fruits of the Mystery—Christmas

Artwork: Sandro Botticelli, *The Mystical Nativity* (c. 1500)

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THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD [CHRISTMAS], Solemnity

December 25, 2013

At the Mass during the Night

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God,
that we, who are gladdened by participation
in the feast of our Redeemer's Nativity,
may through an honorable way of life become worthy of union with him.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.**

REFLECTION

There are so many thoughts that come to mind when one has celebrated this great Solemnity. As this prayer speaks for us some of those thoughts, how can we not be excited about continuing our celebration with others on this night that recalls the birth of Christ?

As this prayer is prayed, we are at the point of completing our participation in the Eucharistic feast and are ready to go out into the world to live our lives in reflection of him whose birth we celebrate. Our hearts have to be filled with enormous joy as we prepare to leave this gathering and be the Christ to others that will enable our union with him both here on earth and in the life to come. To paraphrase a known hymn – then how can I keep from singing his praises and sharing his love with all whom I meet?

PRAYER

O God of immense love, today we celebrate with great joy your gift to us of our Redeemer. As you did in ancient times, fill our lives with signs of your continuing concern for all peoples. Bring each of us to a place of peace where we can proclaim your love without hesitation to all whom we encounter in our daily lives. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and King. Amen.

Submitted by:

Sister Sharon Marie Stola, OSB, D.Min.
Director of the Office of Divine Worship and the Catechumenate
Diocese of Joliet-in-Illinois



Artwork: Bicci di Lorenzo, *The Nativity* (15th century)

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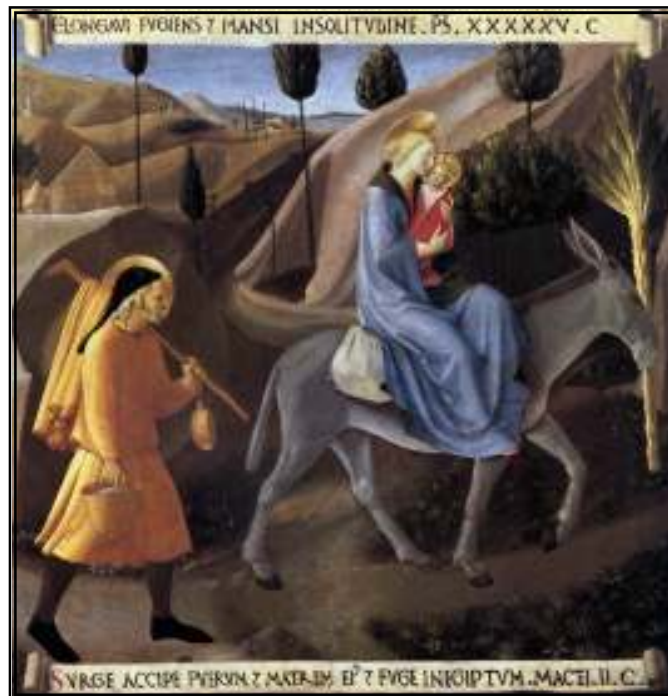
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THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH, Feast
December 29, 2013

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament,
most merciful Father,
to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family,
so that, after the trials of this world,
we may share their company for ever.
Through Christ our Lord.**

REFLECTION



The food and drink that refreshes us! After a long or difficult day, a lengthy period of work, what most refreshes you? What satisfies? What gives you strength to carry on?

As we hear this Prayer after Communion today, we are invited into the mystery of the family life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Perhaps some of the images from today's scriptures, especially Colossians, will come to mind: compassion, kindness, humility.... [Although the reading is assigned to Year A, it may be used in any Year in place of the reading for Year B and Year C.] We can be sure that these virtues were evident in the family life in the household at Nazareth.

Like all Prayers after Communion, we are invited here to action, to conversion of heart having just encountered Christ in Communion. We can be sure that this food and drink for our journey of faith will provide refreshment as we continue on our pilgrim way. This journey will lead us ultimately to a communion of life in the Holy Trinity and in union with the Holy Family of Nazareth.

PRAYER

God of the journey, you guide your family, the Church, along the path of salvation. Help us to remain faithful in word and in deed to the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth. May our worship today strengthen us to witness to the Gospel we cherish. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Submitted by:

Rev. Steven P. Walter, Pastor
Saint John Fisher Parish
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Artwork: Fra Angelico, *Flight into Egypt* (1451-52)

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The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord [Christmas]

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

January 1, 2014

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**We have received this heavenly Sacrament with joy, O Lord:
grant, we pray,
that it may lead us to eternal life,
for we rejoice to proclaim the blessed ever-Virgin Mary
Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church.
Through Christ our Lord.**

REFLECTION



Prior to Vatican Council II, this feast did not exist. This Solemnity was new to the post-Vatican II Missal and so was the composition of this prayer.

In this prayer, we come to the Lord with grateful hearts, for we have been fed by the Word of God and have dined at the table of the Lord. We pray that our participation in this heavenly Sacrament will lead us to eternal life. If, however, the reception is to lead us, then we must be prepared to follow.

Mary, first disciple, Mother of God and of the Church, is a reminder to us that we continue the mission of Jesus, the mission of the Church beyond the building in which we gather. We encounter Christ in the Eucharist so that through us others can encounter Christ in the world.

PRAYER

Loving Father,
give us courage like Mary to follow you and to proclaim your goodness.
Help us to be faithful disciples today and always.
Please show us how. Amen.

Submitted by:

Sue Huett
Director, Office of Worship
Diocese of Belleville

Artwork: Giotto di Bondone, *Scenes from the Life of Christ: Nativity* (detail) (1304-06)

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[In the Dioceses of the United States]
Sunday between January 2 and January 8
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, Solemnity
January 4, 2014

At the Vigil Mass
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Renewed by sacred nourishment,
we implore your mercy, O Lord,
that the star of your justice
may shine always bright in our minds
and that our true treasure may ever consist
in our confession of you.
Through Christ our Lord.**



REFLECTION

As with the other liturgical celebrations of the Christmas cycle, the central element of this Solemnity is the birth of Christ. The Word made flesh came once to us at Bethlehem, yet is present in the sacred nourishment referred to in this Prayer after Communion. There are no barriers preventing our being in the presence of the Holy One except our self-imposed blindness. Thus, on this feast of revelation, we implore God's mercy which tempers justice, Christ's bright star in every human heart, to illuminate the path to holiness of life. This is the true treasure of living by the light of Christ, guiding our confession which is displayed in words and in deeds that are fruitful and just.

It is one thing to pray for guidance and another to accept the guidance offered. A conscious desire to be attentive to the grace of inspiration is the unspoken implication of this simple but evocative Epiphany prayer.

PRAYER

O God, enough with the shadows that blind your people!
Open a way for us when there is no way;
and, by the light of your Son,
guide us to our true homeland,
fulfilled at last with the joy of your presence for ever and ever. Amen.

Submitted by:

Fr. Tom Ranzino
Pastor: St. Jean Vianney Church/Director of Office of Worship
Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Artwork: Jacopo Torriti, *Apse mosaic: Adoration of the Kings* (1296)

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[In the Dioceses of the United States]
Sunday between January 2 and January 8
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, Solemnity
January 5, 2014

At the Mass during the Day
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Go before us with heavenly light, O Lord,
always and everywhere,
that we may perceive with clear sight
and revere with true affection
the mystery in which you have willed us to participate.
Through Christ our Lord.**

REFLECTION



This Prayer after Communion for this Mass during the day admits the birth of the Savior, who is the presence of Light which dispels the dark gloom of sinful humanity. This is God's true gift, a once and for all event in Bethlehem which continues to interpret the ages until this very day.

We pray that same Light go before us, this heavenly light, the stuff of brilliance, given in an age which delivers darkness as a suspicious gift. We ask not for cheap light, but heavenly light from the Spirit of God, so that we may see and understand what we see, dismissing suspicious gifts and desiring God's true gift, costly entrance into the Mystery, i.e., the Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. This is the bright darkness which unfolds in living through ever deepening spirals of life and death, death and life. The secret of life itself.

PRAYER

Cast your heavenly light before us, O Christ,
that we may see clearly the path of life
and have courage to follow you without fear. Amen.

Submitted by:

Fr. Tom Ranzino
Pastor: St. Jean Vianney Church
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Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Artwork: Fra Angelico, *Adoration of the Magi* (1423-24)

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