

**Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC]**  
**Mystagogical Reflection on the Collects of the *Roman Missal***  
Link to Mystagogy Project on FDLC home page: <http://www.fdlc.org>.

**ORDINARY TIME – winter**

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

January 20, 2013

Collect:

Almighty ever-living God,  
who govern all things,  
both in heaven and on earth,  
mercifully hear the pleading of your people  
and bestow your peace on our times.  
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:

Today's Collect first appeared in the *Hadrian Sacramentary* (7-8 century) as a non-seasonal daily prayer. It was included in the Roman Missal of Pius V (1570) as the Collect for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

Like today's Entrance Antiphon, the prayer acknowledges that God governs all things. Everything in "heaven and on earth" (Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16) are subject to him. Confident of his authority, his power, and his abiding mercy, we plead that God will give us peace in our time.

One wonders how often this same plea has been sent to God. In the course of countless centuries, in countless countries, for countless reasons, people have had to live in fear. Oppression, aggression, war, terrorism, invasions, armed conflicts, and hostilities between governments or among peoples have ravaged the human landscape and have defiled the human spirit. In our own homes, jealousy, anger, addictions, and selfish behavior have destroyed harmony in personal relationships. Yet, what we all long for is peace – a state of tranquility which will allow love to grow and life to progress undisturbed.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, hear the plea of your people and give us peace in our times.  
May we be the instruments of that peace,  
standing against injustice, offering compromises, recognizing the dignity of all,  
and bearing witness to the peace which only faith in you can give. Amen.

Submitted by:

Rita Thiron  
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Diocese of Lansing

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THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
January 27, 2013

Collect:

Almighty ever-living God,  
direct our actions according to your good pleasure,  
that in the name of your beloved Son  
we may abound in good works.  
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 texts of the liturgies following the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord reflect our joy that Christ our Light has come into the world. Yet we progress in our Christian lives. After Christmas Time, we are reminded by the Lectionary texts that the infant Jesus grew into a child and then into a man. The adult Jesus, emboldened by the knowledge and experience of being God's "beloved Son" (as heard in this Collect) submitted to his Father's will. Our Baptism in him calls us, too, to walk in the light and to submit to God's will.

The Collect begins with God's initiative and "good pleasure" in sending us his Son. It ends at the response to which we are called: to "abound in good works." We followers of Jesus call that "discipleship."

A now-famous prayer by Bishop Ken Untener of the Diocese of Sagniaaw (d. 2004) says, "We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs." We can't do everything, but we use the gifts we have to transform our world as we have first been transformed in Christ. When we walk with Christ through lives of humble service, these short days and long nights in the Northern Hemisphere shine with the Light of Christ.

Prayer:

Lord God, we seek to live as your beloved; fill our days with your radiant light.

Submitted by:  
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FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

February 3, 2013

Collect:

Grant us, Lord our God,  
that we may honor you with all our mind,  
and love everyone in truth of 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:

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.” These words of the prophet Jeremiah in the first reading are both exciting and frightening. To be known utterly from the beginning is difficult to fathom. Can we trust that the creator has instilled love and truth in our hearts and minds? Is this what we would call our true self, and, if so, how can we access it?

This prayer calls us to enter into the depths of our hearts and minds to find this treasure, this real and true self that is present from our birth. St. John wrote, “There is a truth that lives within us that will be with us forever” (2 John 2). And the love that St. Paul reminds us is the greatest virtue, is the love that emanates from that deep place within. It is a love that is pure, undiluted, ever new and holy, given to us before we were formed in the womb. We may not always act as if we believe this, but let us believe that the seeds of honor and love are within us, placed there by the God who calls them forth to grow and give life to all.

Prayer:

Creator God, when darkness seems to surround me, help me to remember that your love and truth have existed within me before my birth, and guide me to act as if this is so.

Submitted by:  
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FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

February 10, 2013

Collect:

Keep you family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,  
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,  
they may be defended always by your protection.  
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 Collect begins by identifying us as members of the Family of God and asks that the Lord keep us with a parent-like, “unfailing care.” Moreover, the prayer asks that, as members of that family, the Lord might protect us and that through our Christian hope we might be upheld in safety.

The New Testament speaks at length about what it means to be members of God’s “whole family in heaven and on earth” (Ephesians. 3:15), the “household of faith” (Galatians 6:10), and “children of God” (John 1:12). We know that this membership is through no efforts of our own and in fact that it does not even come through natural birth, but only through our re-birth in the waters of Baptism.

We also know that, as in all families, our membership in the Lord’s family, the Church, comes with certain responsibilities and expectations: “Do good to everyone” (Galatians 6:10), be “rooted and grounded in love” (Ephesians 3:17), “live according to the Spirit with things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5). Living thus, as a member of the Family of God, we do indeed have access to that “grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God” (Romans 5:2).

Prayer:

Father of all, make me truly hopeful in the promises you make to your children, and help me to live genuinely as a member of your family, gathered from the ends of the earth, to praise and glorify you for ever, through your Beloved Son, Christ our Lord.

Submitted by:

Todd Williamson

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### End Ordinary Time – winter ###