

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC]
Mystagogical Reflection on the Collects of the *Roman Missal*
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FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 7, 2013

Collect:

O God, who in the abasement of your Son
have raised up a fallen world,
fill your faithful with holy joy,
for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin
you bestow eternal gladness.
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 this ancient text, an earlier version of which can be traced back to the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, we find a number of striking and contrasting images: the “falling” of Christ, the world raised up, the rescue of slaves, and holy joy leading to eternal gladness! The Paschal Mystery in one sentence!

In the first phrase, one might immediately think of Saint Paul’s great Philippian hymn, singing of how Christ “emptied himself and took the form of a slave” (Phil 2:7). It is the great mystery of God’s incomprehensible love that, out of the abasement of his Son, the fallen world might be redeemed, and like our Hebrew ancestors, he might *rescue* us, too, from slavery and certain death.

The phrases “holy joy” and “eternal gladness” are profound. It is a *holy* joy for which we ask – not that which is passing, temporary, shallow, incomplete; but rather, a joy that is unearned, that is gift, that is lasting, running to the very core of who we are as God’s sons and daughters – that is, holy. Our current world, culture, and society are incapable of providing us holy joy and eternal gladness. That can come only from God; and for that, we lift our hearts to the Lord, in praise and thanksgiving!

Prayer:

God of unending joy, help me to live in imitation of your Son, in whose image I have been remade. Like him, may I empty myself – to you, to my brothers and sisters, and to all whom I might meet today.

Submitted by:
Todd Williamson
Director, Office of Divine Worship
Archdiocese of Chicago

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