

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC]

Mystagogical Reflection on Texts of the *Roman Missal*

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Mystagogical Reflections on the Collect & Prayer after Communion: Solemnities of the Lord and 10-13 Sundays in Ordinary Time 2016

MYSTAGOGY ON THE MASS TEXTS FOR SUNDAYS, SOLEMNITIES, AND HOLYDAYS

"Mystagogy", simply put, is the study of mystery. For Christians, it focuses on the Paschal Mystery of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an ancient and beloved Church method for reflecting on the experiences of worship, prayer, and the Christian life.

Collect or Opening Prayer	Prayer after Communion
<p>The Collect 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.</p> <p>Catherine Combier-Donovan Archdiocese of Baltimore</p>	<p>The single purpose of the Prayer after Communion is to recapitulate in prayer every word, action, and belief that has led us to (and will soon send us from) the Eucharist fashioned (by profound sacred words and actions) and received by those gathered. Although not words of our choosing, but rather those supplied by the Church, it attempts to verbally express what we have experienced and believe.</p> <p>Father Jim Bessert Diocese of Saginaw</p>



The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC] formed an Ad Hoc Committee for Mystagogical Reflection. The committee task is to provide help for reflecting on texts of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*. The 2013 effort focused on the Collect or Opening Prayer for Sunday, Solemnity, and Holyday Masses. The 2014 work addressed the Prayer after Communion with implications for discipleship. This work is on the FDLC website in PDF: <http://www.fdlc.org> – click the Mystagogical Reflections button.

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Steve Erspamer,
I Am with You Always,
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Over the course of the year
the Church celebrates the whole mystery of Christ,
from the Incarnation to Pentecost Day
and the days of waiting for the Advent of the Lord.

Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar [UNLYC], no. 17

SOLEMNITIES OF THE LORD following Easter Time and ORDINARY TIME Weeks 10-13

Apart from those seasons having their own distinctive character, thirty-three or thirty-four weeks remain in the yearly cycle that do not celebrate a specific aspect of the mystery of Christ. Rather, especially on the Sundays, they are devoted to the mystery of Christ in all its aspects. This period is known as Ordinary Time.

Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar [UNLYC], no. 43

The Liturgical Day	Date	Page
THE MOST HOLY TRINITY, Solemnity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Sunday after Pentecost 	May 22, 2016	04-05
THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (Corpus Christi), Solemnity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday after the Most Holy Trinity • in the Dioceses of the United States 	May 29, 2016	06-07
THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS, Solemnity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost 	Friday, June 03, 2016	08-11
TENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	June 05, 2016	12-13
ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	June 12, 2016	14-15
TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	June 19, 2016 and Father's Day	16-17
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	June 26, 2016	18-19
SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES, Solemnity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Vigil Mass 	Celebrated Tuesday evening, June 28, 2016	20-21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Mass during the Day 	Wednesday, June 29, 2016	22-23

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First Sunday after Pentecost

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY, **Solemnity**

Collect:

God our Father, who by sending into the world
the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification
made known to the human race your wondrous mystery,
grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith,
we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory
and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.
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 the *Gelasian Sacramentary* had a preface in honor of the Trinity, this feast was not added to the universal calendar until 1334 by Pope John XXII while in Avignon. The present prayer is an amplification of the prayer found in the 1962 Missal.

It begins by addressing God as Father, the only Sunday Collect which addresses God as Father, a unique understanding of the Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Son is addressed as the Word of truth and the Spirit as the Spirit of sanctification, both sent into the world by the Father to make known to the human race the wondrous mystery of the essence of God as Trinity.

There is no mention of the Son being involved in the sending of the Spirit, no *filioque* controversy, which up until our time was a source of irritation to the Orthodox. The prayer continues by declaring that in professing the true faith, that of God as a marvelous trinity of persons, we might acknowledge both the eternal glory of the Trinity and adore its powerful unity.

Prayer:

May our prayer echo the Communion Antiphon: that we may be children of God who have in our hearts the Spirit of the Son who cries out Abba, Father. May we be a community of persons, united in the grace of the loving Trinity, a community of love and unity, who know that God is our Father and the Father of all.

Submitted by:
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First Sunday after Pentecost
THE MOST HOLY TRINITY, *Solemnity*

Prayer after Communion:

May receiving this Sacrament, O Lord our God,
bring us health of body and soul,
as we confess your eternal holy Trinity and undivided Unity.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

This brief prayer from our Roman tradition encapsulates the essence of what it means to participate in the Eucharist: that the Body and Blood of Christ we have shared heals the sin we carry and the divisions that keep us separated from one another. Therefore, we who have been reconciled to God and to one another are sent to announce to the world that the sin and enmity that continue to divide humankind are also healed in the unifying love of God.

Like the Trinity, health of body and soul is not a static, enclosed condition meant only for one's own benefit. God's healing is not an end in itself. Rather, healing is for the glory of God. Healing reunites us into the midst of the assembly that together we might confess and proclaim God's reconciling love for all and draw others into this union with God. That is what we witness in the undivided Unity of the Trinity – not a mathematical conundrum but an ever-giving, self-sacrificing offer of love for the Other.

If we listen carefully, these prayers after Communion in myriad ways remind us of this essential Christian mission. We who have been drawn into the healing love of the Trinity are sent to be that love for others that they too might be one with us in the eternal life of God.

Prayer:

Healer of body and soul, may we who have been reconciled by divine Love draw others by our word and deed into your life-giving Unity so that all may be eternally one in you. Amen.

Submitted by:
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[In the Diocese of the United States]

Sunday after the Most Holy Trinity

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI), **Solemnity**

Collect:

O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament
have left us a memorial of your Passion,
grant us, we pray,
so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood
that we may always experience in ourselves
the fruits of your redemption.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Reflection:

Everything we are and believe as Christ's followers is defined by Eucharist. It is the dynamic action of God's grace and our gratitude that transforms us into the one Body that is Christ. This lovely prayer reminds us that we have gathered to remember and to revere, to experience the joy of Communion – each of us consuming Christ and becoming one with him.

And how are we to prepare ourselves for this great feast of becoming? St. Augustine declared that “Christ is the bread, awaiting hunger.” He is telling us Christ is always there for us in the bread, a constant source of nourishment and healing. Our part is to show up hungry. We bring to the table all that is keeping us separate and divided – our pride, anger, fear, impatience. We bring whatever is broken in us, whatever pulls us away or down. We bring it eagerly and reverently, a gift for the table, hungry for what awaits us there. And we leave the table as “satisfied” as the crowds who gathered to hear Jesus speak, carrying Christ to the waiting world where God's abundant love will bear fruit.

Prayer:

Loving God, as we approach the table of your love for us, let us remember to bring the burdens of our lives, there to be transformed by the mysteries of your Body and Blood into the grace that redeems both us and the world.

Submitted by:

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[In the Diocese of the United States]

Sunday after the Most Holy Trinity

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI), Solemnity

Prayer after Communion:

Grant, O Lord, we pray,
that we may delight for all eternity
in that share in your divine life,
which is foreshadowed in the present age
by our reception of your precious Body and Blood.
Who live and reign for ever and ever.

Reflection:

Those who pray this prayer have shared in the Body and Blood of the Lord at Communion from the Table of the Eucharist and have a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. Those praying are paying attention to the Holy Presence encountered in the entire Communion procession. It is the assembly walking together in *life-procession* seeking to satisfy the hungers which cannot be satisfied in any other way. There is more here than meets the eye!

Having shared in Communion, we acknowledge that our hungers are satisfied not only as individuals but as a community. The *divine life foreshadowed in the present age* is available to us now through the conscious act of surrender, reception, and openness to receive. In that act, we become *one with* the One whom we receive. We practice this communal act week after week until that day when, at the last, we will take this Body and Blood, this *divine life*, for the final time, as *viaticum*, that is, *food for the journey*.

Prayer:

O God,
we hunger for so much in this world that is not you.
Order our desires to hunger for you
that our delight and contentment
may be complete with you, this side of heaven,
and, at the last, before your holy face. Amen.

Submitted by:
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Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost

THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS, **Solemnity**

A

Collect:

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we, who glory in the Heart of your beloved Son
and recall the wonders of his love for us,
may be made worthy to receive
an overflowing measure of grace
from that fount of heavenly gifts.
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:

What does it mean to “glory in” a bodily organ, even one belonging to Christ? We may confidently quell any reservations our modern minds might harbor about the imagery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the physical heart of Jesus is not, in a literal sense, the object of our devotion this day. Our “glory in the Heart” of Jesus here is what theologian Karl Rahner called a primordial image: one which represents the fundamental core of the person of Jesus Christ. And that core is pure love, for love is the heart of the mystery of our faith.

As we begin this celebration, as we begin to “recall the wonders” of the radical love of Christ Jesus, this Collect A directs us to pray that we be made worthy to receive that abundance of grace which flows freely from the fount of Christ’s love for us. We ask for “an overflowing measure” so that we may, in imitation of Christ, gratuitously bestow this self-sacrificial love upon the world.

Prayer:

Wash us in the river of grace, Lord, which flows from the Heart of your Son Jesus. Help us manifest his wondrous love, most of all in places where hatred holds sway. In us, let your love conquer all.

Submitted by:
Emily Strand
Chairperson, Worship Commission
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Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost
THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS, **Solemnity**

Or B:

Collect:

O God, who in the Heart of your Son,
wounded by our sins,
bestow on us in mercy
the boundless treasures of your love,
grant, we pray,
that, in paying him the homage of our devotion,
we may also offer worthy reparation.
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 older of the two Collects for the Sacred Heart of Jesus gives significant attention to our human sinfulness, yet even more, to the mercy of God as expressed in the love of Christ. The very Heart that has been wounded by our sinfulness becomes the fount of God's "boundless treasures" of love for us. Truly, as the hymn goes, there is a wideness in God's mercy which, to our limited imaginations, only a vast ocean can begin to signify.

God's mercy is highlighted in the second part of the prayer as well. For how could we ever offer "worthy reparation" for our sins against Christ? Who could forget what he endured in his Passion and Death? That we refuse to forget – that we find glory in the Cross and make our earnest devotion to the Heart which we ourselves have wounded – is attributable not to our piety or goodness, but to those "boundless treasures" of grace which flow from the person of Christ.

It is this person, this foundational core of love which lies at the heart of Christ and his Paschal Mystery, whom we celebrate today. Because of God's mercy, we can make "worthy reparation": when the "homage of our devotion" leads us to bring Christ's radical love to the world. In this work, our celebration is complete.

Prayer:

God of mercy, you forgive our failings like a mother whose unchangeable love keeps her ever-patient with her children. Through our devotion to the Sacred Heart, perfect in us the love which flows from your Son, and give us courage to share it with our needy world.

Submitted by:
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Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost
THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS, **Solemnity**

Prayer after Communion:

May this sacrament of charity, O Lord,
make us fervent with the fire of holy love,
so that, drawn always to your Son,
we may learn to see him in our neighbor.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

It is not some amorphous idea, this love of which we speak when we celebrate the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is, as Pope Benedict XVI has called it, love in its most radical form. It is a love which seeks to burn up within us all that is concerned with selfish desires. It is a love which constantly seeks its source, drawing us to the Christ, in whose Paschal Mystery this “holy love” finds its ultimate expression.

And it is a love which, in constantly seeking its source, accordingly, draws us to one another. The “sacrament of charity” (or, as one might translate it, the sacrament of friendship) extends to us not only God’s friendship, but God’s way of friendship. The Eucharist, that memorial of the love which lies at the heart of the Paschal Mystery, gives us a share in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For didn’t God promise to replace our stony hearts with hearts of flesh (Ezekial 36:26)? Our new hearts burn within us, opening our eyes to recognize Christ in bread and wine, and in the stranger with whom we share this holy meal.

Prayer:

God of friendship, through this meal, awaken within us the fire of your holy love. Burn away selfishness, arrogance, and petty anger – and open our eyes to see your face and find your grace in those around us.

Submitted by:
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TENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Collect:

O God, from whom all good things come,
grant that we, who call on you in our need,
may at your prompting discern what is right,
and by your guidance do it.
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 reminds us that all good things come from God. And we pray that we are able to determine how to use the great things God gives us in life through discernment.

The first time this Collect appears is in the *Gelasian Sacramentary* and its source could be based upon James 1:17 that says God is the source of every perfect gift.

Some say that this Scripture from James as well as this Collect are the foundations of the text for the song, "All Good Gifts."

Prayer:

Almighty God, source of every gift, from you comes all that I am. Help me to distinguish how I am to use the many gifts you have showered upon me so that they will be of benefit to others, especially the poor, oppressed, and those in need. Allow me to bring light and life into the lives of others through this sharing of gifts.

Submitted by:
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TENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Prayer after Communion:

May your healing work, O Lord,
free us, we pray, from doing evil
and lead us to what is right.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

In the Prayer after Communion, we call on God to free us from doing evil and to lead us to what is right. We may wonder what is evil in the eyes of God and what is right in the eyes of God. Do we do evil acts and not know that they are evil? Do we always try to do what we think is right? In the Gospels, we see that Jesus chose those who were sinners. Their experience with Jesus changed their lives, transformed them to follow him and to love the Father. He revealed to them that the One who sent him was a merciful and loving God.

When we experience our Lord, can we continue to do the same as before? Are we open to transformation and gladly follow him as his disciples did? Because Jesus died to give us everlasting life, St. Paul tells us in the Letter to the Romans that we have “been freed from sin” (6:22) and “...must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus” (6:11). Today we ask the Lord that, through his healing work, he transform us to do what is right and live for God.

Prayer:

Good and gracious God, we humbly ask that through the Body and Blood of Christ we have received, nourish and strengthen and lead us to you so that we may rejoice with you in the your heavenly kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Submitted by:
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ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Collect:

O God, strength of those who hope in you,
graciously hear our pleas,
and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing,
grant us always the help of your grace,
that in following your commands
we may please you by our resolve and our deeds.
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 us always the help of your grace.” Sometimes it is difficult for us to understand what it means to be granted the gift of grace. It is by God’s grace as Paul says, “That I am who I am....” Without God’s grace and mercy we have no life. God created us. God loves us. God sent his only Son to redeem us. Grace is God’s unmerited favor. Grace is God doing good for us that we do not deserve. Everything about our relationship with God depends upon us trusting him in faith, by resting in his grace. We are to come to him as a little child saying, “Daddy, pick me up”. And he does. Then he carries us.

Prayer:

Gracious and Almighty God, we thank you for your undeserving grace. We thank you for your light of love to share with one another; all created in your likeness. Give us the strength that we lack in our lives and help us to lighten the way and carry the load for the ever-changing problems of the world.

Submitted by:
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ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Prayer after Communion:

As this reception of your Holy Communion, O Lord,
foreshadows the union of the faithful in you,
so may it bring about unity in your Church.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

The theological concept of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as foreshadows or foretastes of the heavenly realities, is often not articulated. Yet, mystically, in the celebration of the Eucharist, we join the heavenly hosts around God's throne, joining the hymn of the Angels, the *Sanctus*, and we are truly able to receive not only the Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Communion, but are also able to be one with the communion of Saints. This reception truly brings about our union with God and with all the Saints and Angels.

Yet, even more mystically, not only does the whole Church become one in every Eucharist, we also become one with every one present, and with the whole Church throughout time and space. It is a marvelous sign of unity which, while theologically true, can only be understood sacramentally as a foreshadowing of the life to come.

Prayer:

Echoing the Communion Antiphons, may we only seek to live in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives, a reality only understood in eternity. And may we be one with those in need, keeping in mind all the names of those we lift up in prayer.

Submitted by:
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TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Collect:

Grant, O Lord,
that we may always revere and love your holy name,
for you never deprive of your guidance
those you set firm on the foundation of your love.
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 for the Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time comes from the eighth century *Gelasian Sacramentary*. Like most ancient Collects it is both brief and profound.

The prayer begins with a request that we may always revere and love the holy name of the Lord. The word translated from the Latin text as “revere” is “fear”. The Latin joins the inseparable twins of fear and love. Moderns tend to be uncomfortable with the word fear because we tend to equate it with terror. But the *fear of the Lord* is more related to our fascination with the power and presence of the divinity to which we are inexorably drawn. Fear of the Lord, our attraction to the Lord, leads to love of the Lord.

This foundation of his love gives us the assurance that, as his children, he will always be with us to pilot us through the complexities of life.

Prayer:

Loving God, we long to see you in your holy place. Grant us the confidence to follow in your footsteps and to do your work and your will.

Submitted by:
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TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Prayer after Communion:

Renewed and nourished
by the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of your Son,
we ask of your mercy, O Lord,
that what we celebrate with constant devotion
may be our sure pledge of redemption.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

This prayer has all the earmarks of the life and thoughts of St. Augustine. Despite his wanderings into the seductive evils during his young adult life, Augustine made a mid-course correction and turned toward a life of goodness. Although he constantly struggled with sin and repentance, he was emotionally expressive of his unbounded love of God each time he received the Body and Blood of Christ. Augustine not only understood the spiritual nourishment that the Eucharist provides, he physically yearned for Eucharist in his later years.

Could we ever be that much in love with receiving the Body and Blood of Christ? Do we nurture a constant devotion? Do we understand that the effect of Eucharist is the joy of heaven? If we can become what we eat, then redemption and heaven are ours. Why do we make receiving the Body and Blood of Christ so complicated, when it is really one of the simplest gifts that God provides for our spiritual health? We must ask St. Augustine to intercede for us, as we beg God for the mercy that can sustain our faith.

Prayer:

Father God, you sent your Son to redeem us. In your love, you gave us the gift of God-self in bread blessed and broken, and wine poured out for all. Through the sustenance of the Body and Blood of Christ, may we become what we eat and gain the redemption that you have promised.

Submitted by:
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THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Collect:

O God, who through the grace of adoption
chose us to be children of light,
grant, we pray,
that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error
but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth.
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 oft recalled Scripture passage, “God is light; in him there is no darkness...” (1 Jn 1:5-7) may have inspired this 10th or 11th century Collect, which was added to the Roman Missal after the Second Vatican Council.

There is a certain Easter Vigil quality to this Collect, as we pray not to be wrapped in darkness, but rather to stand in the light of truth. To be wrapped in darkness of error is to reject God’s grace and goodness. To walk in the light means to live by the grace of God, according to his will for us, by loving our neighbor as Christ first loved us.

During these summer days when daylight lasts longer, perhaps we can ponder the ways that we walk in the light of Christ, the ways that we love the poor and vulnerable, the ways we bring the love of Christ to a world darkened by sin and corruption.

Prayer:

God of goodness and truth, teach us to live as children of the light. Give us the grace and courage to stand in the bright light of your truth in the midst of a world so very much in need of your grace and presence.

Submitted by:
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THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Prayer after Communion:

May this divine sacrifice we have offered and received
fill us with life, O Lord, we pray,
so that, bound to you in lasting charity,
we may bear fruit that lasts for ever.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

I'm always amused when my children use MY money to buy ME a gift. They are so proud to get something for me for Christmas or my birthday, and they think very carefully about what I might like. Of course, in this case – and in most cases – it's not the amount spent or even whose money was used: it's the thought that counts.

Our worship of God is just the same: the only gifts we can give to God are what he first gave us. We offer to God what we have first received. This Prayer after Communion invites us to contemplate this fact, which is at the heart of our sacramental theology. Simple bread and wine, to be sure, but also our very lives: this is all we can give back to God – not holocausts or sacrifices.

The prayer continues to ask that in our offering and receiving we might be filled with life and bound to God in love. These two dynamics are inseparable: the eternal life we share with Christ through Baptism is bound up in the *caritas* that flows from the very heart of God. Our sharing in the Eucharist must lead us to true love and care for others – this is the fruit that lasts forever.

Prayer:

O Source of divine life, through offering and receiving, may we be more closely conformed to the image of your Son, in whose Paschal love we were made and saved.

Submitted by:

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June 29

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES, **Solemnity**

At the Vigil Mass

Collect:

Grant, we pray, O Lord our God,
that we may be sustained
by the intercession of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul,
that, as through them you gave your Church
the foundations of her heavenly office,
so through them you may help her to eternal salvation.
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 on this Solemnity prompts us to look to the roots of this religion known as Christianity. Just as Abraham was the first to deliver the knowledge of monotheism, the truth of One True God, that is, the foundation of the religion of our ancestors in the faith; Peter and Paul taught the message of Jesus and set in motion the religion of Christianity.

It is that teaching that implants within us the hope and promise of the ultimate fulfillment of the covenant: an eternal dwelling place with the One True God. Through our first teachers, Peter and Paul, we trust that our prayer for salvation is received by God.

Prayer:

O Lord, like Peter and Paul, may we have the courage to share the teachings of our faith and do what we can to inspire others to truly be, as we profess, one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Submitted by:
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June 29

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES, **Solemnity**

At the Vigil Mass

Prayer after Communion:

By this heavenly Sacrament, O Lord, we pray,
strengthen your faithful,
whom you have enlightened with the teaching of the Apostles.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

In the Gospel for this day, Jesus instructs Peter to, “feed my sheep” (John 21: 15-19). We are fed in this Liturgy by the sacred food of the Eucharist. We are also fed by the sacred word preached by the Apostles. In the Second Reading this day, Paul acknowledges that this word does not come from human origin but from Jesus Christ, the Redeemer (Galatians 1:11-20). Gamaliel warned the Sanhedrin that if these teachings do come from God, they cannot be stopped. Defying threats, the Apostles did not stop teaching (Acts 5:34-42). Through both word and Eucharist, we are strengthened by Jesus Christ.

Prayer:

Lord, we pray that we may never cease to hunger for the teachings that came first from you and were shared by your Apostles. We pray that we may never fear to continue the apostolic mission through our lives.

Submitted by:
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June 29

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES, **Solemnity**

At the Mass during the Day

Collect:

O God, who on the Solemnity of the Apostles Peter and Paul
give us the noble and holy joy of this day,
grant, we pray, that your Church
may in all things follow the teaching
of those through whom she received
the beginnings of right religion.
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:

When we take into account the concept of our spiritual lives, it is natural for us to recall the shoulders of faith upon whom we stand – in our own personal families, our parish, religious, or diocesan communities. Today’s Collect invites us to purposefully reflect on Saints Peter and Paul upon whose shoulders the entire Church stands and commemorates today.

In honoring their memory and, as the prayer so unmistakably invites us, to appreciatively follow the teachings of these two champions of the faith, we are drawn into the festival of “noble and holy joy”. Notably, the greatness of both Peter and Paul comes from their conversion and call to holiness. Likewise, may we follow in their footsteps with the best and appropriate expression of our discipleship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer:

O God of endless ages, the Church sets before us today Saints Peter and Paul. You knew well their faults and failings; yet, through your Beloved Son, their lives were transformed into faith-filled Apostles on whose shoulders we your Church in this age now stand. Open our hearts that our lives likewise be transformed into the image and likeness of your Son whose name we bear as Christian. We ask this in his name, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, now and for ever. Amen.

Submitted by:

Reverend James Wm. Bessert

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June 29

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES, *Solemnity*

At the Mass during the Day

Prayer after Communion:

Grant us, O Lord,
who have been renewed by this Sacrament,
so to live in the Church,
that, persevering in the breaking of the Bread
and in the teaching of the Apostles,
we may be one heart and one soul,
made steadfast in your love.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

This prayer is inspired by a description of the life of the early Church that is found in the Acts of the Apostles 2:42: “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.”

In the early Church, this meant sharing the same thoughts, attitudes, and desires to take care of everyone so that no one lacked for anything. In the breaking of the bread they recognized Christ’s presence. They were devoted to prayer because through it they were in communion with Christ. Their teachings were about Christ who died and was raised by the Father for the salvation of all.

Is not this description of Church the same for us? Today we pray that in receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, we are renewed in the life of grace given us in Baptism and strengthened to live out the call to be Church. How can we live out this call today? Pope Francis, in his address to Ecclesial Movements on May 18, 2013, gives three words that can help us be Church: “The first: Jesus....The second: prayer....Finally: witness...means living Christianity as an encounter with Jesus that brings me to others....”

Prayer:

Almighty God, we are most grateful for the nourishment and graces received in Holy Communion. Let them strengthen us to be living examples for others in our communities, so that they recognize the presence of Christ in their midst and welcome you into their hearts.

Submitted by:
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