

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC]

Mystagogical Reflection on Texts of the *Roman Missal*

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CHRISTMAS TIME

December 25

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD [CHRISTMAS], **Solemnity**

At the Vigil Mass

Prayer after Communion:

Grant, O Lord, we pray,
that we may draw new vigor
from celebrating the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son,
by whose heavenly mystery we receive both food and drink.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

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December 25

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD [CHRISTMAS], **Solemnity**

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.

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December 25

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD [CHRISTMAS], **Solemnity**

At the Mass at Dawn

Prayer after Communion:

Grant us, Lord, as we honor with joyful devotion
the Nativity of your Son,
that we may come to know with fullness of faith
the hidden depths of this mystery
and to love them ever more and more.
Through Christ our Lord.

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December 25

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD [CHRISTMAS], **Solemnity**

At the Mass during the Day

Prayer after Communion:

Grant, O merciful God,
that, just as the Savior of the world, born this day,
is the author of divine generation for us,
so he may be the giver even of immortality.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

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The Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord [Christmas], or, if there is no Sunday,
December 30.

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
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Archdiocese of Cincinnati

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January 1

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

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

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

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[In the Diocese of the United States]
Sunday between January 2 and January 8
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, **Solemnity**

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

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[In the Diocese of the United States]

Sunday between January 2 and January 8

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, **Solemnity**

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

Director of Office of Worship

Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana

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Sunday after the Epiphany of the Lord
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, **Feast**
January 12, 2014

Prayer after Communion:

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord,
that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son,
we may be your children in name and in truth.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

This feast draws Christmastide to a close; in it we prolong the epiphany of the God-man to the world. Jesus – Creator of All, Splendor of the Father, King of Kings – submits to being baptized...what is assumed can then be redeemed.

We are all adopted children of God: our Baptism makes it so. Yet Jesus is God's Son in a wholly different way – as one who is "begotten". Far from being just a theological abstraction, Jesus is the Son of God from before all time. Each Christmas Day we hear about the Word that was "in the beginning", who was with, and who WAS God.

Jesus' Sonship makes it possible for us to truly be children of God. This prayer following Communion asks that God will strengthen the "family ties" begun in Baptism by this sharing in the family meal, these "sacred gifts" – the Eucharist.

When we base our lives on God's command to listen to his Son Jesus – in the Word proclaimed in the Scriptures, in the life of the Church, in the experiences and wisdom of others grounded in God's Spirit – we will be God's children, not just in name, but also in truth.

Prayer:

God our Father, may your children always listen to the words of your Son, so that we who have been anointed with the oil of gladness may always bring your good news – in name and in truth – to the whole world.

Submitted by:
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