

**Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions [FDLC]
Mystagogical Reflection on Texts of the *Roman Missal***

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

March 9, 2014

Prayer after Communion:

Renewed now with heavenly bread,
by which faith is nourished, hope increased,
and charity strengthened,
we pray, O Lord,
that we may learn to hunger for Christ,
the true and living Bread,
and strive to live by every word
which proceeds from your mouth.
Through Christ our Lord.

Reflection:

This particular prayer was a new composition for the post-Vatican II Missal. In it, we reflect on aspects of what we have obtained from the reception of the Eucharist. We are directed toward contemplation on three important aspects of our Christian life – the theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. These virtues – without which one cannot have the life of God – are the foundations of Christian moral activity. They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children.

The prayer also connects us directly to the Verse before the Gospel in all the Lectionary years for this Sunday. Tempted by Satan in the desert, Jesus replies, “One does not live on bread alone, / but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.” Without physical sustenance for forty days, Christ reminds us that his word is true spiritual nourishment – that which gives us the strength and compassion to love God and neighbor, to live a life of faith, and to keep our focus on the hope of eternal life.

Prayer:

Lord, satisfied now from this heavenly banquet, may we learn to hunger, not for the fare of this world, but for the spiritual sustenance of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith with this nourishment, deepen our love of God above all things, and teach us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

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Excerpt from *The Roman Missal, Third Edition* © 2010, ICEL.

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