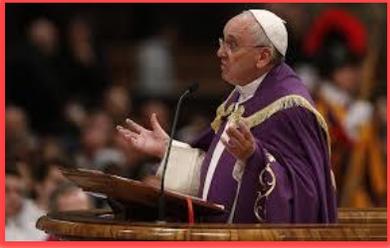


Understanding the Mass: The Collect

At this point in the Mass, *“the priest solemnly invites the people, ‘let us pray.’ Of course, we have been praying from the start, so this invitation means to signal a shift of levels, prayer with a different effectively places us all expressed address to God*



*kind of attention, [that] together into one succinctly the Father”*¹ The General Instruction of the Roman Missal explains, *that, “By an ancient Collect prayer is usually addressed to God the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and is concluded with a Trinitarian ending, or longer ending, in the following manner:”*

- *If the prayer is directed to the Father: Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever,*
- *If it is directed to the Father, but the Son is mentioned at the end; Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever,*
- *If it is directed to the Son: Who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.”*²

The Collect or presidential prayer, proclaimed only by the presiding priest, *“is our way of acknowledging what He [God] has done on our behalf. Next, on the basis of what is remembered, we ask for something in the present, for ourselves and the whole Church and world, which is assembled in our assembling. When we remember what God has done in the past, we have courage and reason to hope for what we ask in the present.”*³ Moreover, *“If it is a feast, what we remember before God in the prayer is the particular saving event that*

¹ What Happens at Mass, Driscoll Pg. 27

² General Instruction of the Roman Missal Par. 54

³ What Happens at Mass, Driscoll Pg. 27

is the subject of the feast.”⁴ For example, on the “Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” celebrated on March 19, the Collect reads,

*Grant, we pray, almighty God, that by St. Joseph’s intercession your church may constantly watch over the unfolding of the mysteries of human salvation, whose beginnings you entrusted to his faithful care. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.*⁵

As you can see, “in the pattern of the Collect, we have the shape or pattern that will mark all the praying of the Mass. All the prayers are addressed to God the Father through the son, in the Holy Spirit. This is the shape of our prayer; this is the pattern of our movement within the divine life of the Trinity. To this prayer the people say, ‘Amen.’”⁶

In his book, “A Biblical Walk through the Mass,” Edward Sri writes, “*This prayer gathers together the intentions⁷ of the people participating in the Mass and concludes the introductory rites.*”

When discussing the Collect it is worth noting the development of the Collect itself. In his book, “The Mystery of Faith,” Lawrence Johnson explains, “*In the liturgical renewal after the Second Vatican Council, an effort has been made to restore certain earlier unique function of the Collect, which is one of the three ‘presidential orations’ in the Mass, by having it follow a time of silent petition and also by stipulating that it is not to be followed by additional requests or commemorations.*” Furthermore Johnson adds, “The texts of the Collects found in the Roman Missal today are taken from the former Roman Missal and from ancient liturgical books (even those of non-Roman origin), although in the latter case the texts have often been

⁴ Ibid Pg. 28

⁵ The Roman Missal, Catholic Book Publishing Corp. New Jersey, Pg. 685

⁶ What Happens at Mass, Driscoll. Pg. 28

⁷ Intentions at Mass are powerful. The Priest has to have an intention for the Mass, and the faithful are encouraged to have intentions as well. (a future teaching on intentions will follow).

altered. At times it is only the Collect that expresses the particular character of the celebration,”⁸ as in the example of the Solemnity of St. Joseph above.

Furthermore, in his course, “The New Liturgy Translation ST-85, Fr. Jeremy Driscoll, O.S.B, explains that most of the prayers in the “3rd Edition of the Roman Missal,”

now more true
Driscoll worked
Vox Clara (Clear
“which has been



copy written in 2011, are to the original Latin. Fr. Driscoll worked for the Vatican on the (Clear Voice) Committee, established to assist and

advise the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in fulfilling its responsibilities with regard to the English translations of liturgical texts.”⁹ Fr. Driscoll, when translating, made it clear that special attention was paid to content, tone, special vocabulary, and “*theological syntax*,” which are how everything fits together.¹⁰ Having taken the course that Fr. Driscoll presented, I can assure you that extensive attention was paid to making sure that what we pray today in the Mass is as true as the Vox Clara Committee could make it at the time. Driscoll explained that the Tridentine Missal (Trent 1570), was slightly redone in 1962, and it lasted till the end of the council. Then, with the liturgical changes that were made by the council, mainly, that the use of the vernacular was allowed, a new Roman Missal was translated hastily. Hence, the translation was not as true as it could have been. Thus, from the beginning, the bishops were calling for a more true translation of the Roman Missal, which is what we have today. Some side-by-side

⁸ The Mystery of faith, Johnson Pg. 23

⁹ Message from Pope John Paul II on establishment of *Vox Clara* (Clear voice) committee on English translation of liturgical texts. □ April 20, 2002 Posted on Adoremus Bulletin follow this link to see the short letter written by Pope John Paul II, <http://www.adoremus.org/VoxClara.html>

¹⁰ The New Liturgy Translation ST-85, Driscoll

examples will demonstrate what the bishops meant. For example, the Collect from the Third Sunday in Advent read this way:

The Roman Missal Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Council and Published by the Authority of Pope Paul VI, Catholic Publishing Corp. 1985:

Third Sunday Advent Collect:

Lord God, may we your people, who look forward to the Birthday of Christ experience the joy of salvation, and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives with and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Third Edition of the Roman Missal Renewed by Decree of The Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II, Catholic Publishing Corp. 2011

Third Sunday Advent Collect:

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the Lord's Nativity, enable us we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

As you can see, there are similarities in the texts, but the new translation is truer to the original Latin. In the class we had a side-by side textbook, and we also had access to the Latin text. Ultimately, the Third Sunday in Advent also known as Gaudate Sunday is about rejoicing because we are past the halfway point in Advent. One scripture reference sums up part of the theme in the Collect. St. Paul writes, "*Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus*" (Phil 4:4-9).

Photo Sources:

Pope Francis Pg. 1

<https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSkQEWAgrQvfoBOFwn93KhYnVqx16-H6LHfBwcAwqXiUbiZIMHz>

Roman Missal Pg. 3

<http://blogs.nd.edu/oblation/files/2015/04/NewRomanMissal.jpg>