

Opening Prayer (The Collect)

“Let us pray”. All pray silently with the priest. Then the priest, with hands outstretched says the Collect, followed by an “amen” by the people.

The prayer known as the Collect has a distinctly Roman origin and format and dates from the fifth century. It contains an address, a petition and a conclusion, as did the pagan prayers used at Rome. The address to the Father is at times extended by recalling a particular feast, or mystery or motive for the petition. The petition itself is the core of the prayer and usually is very general, since the prayer sums up the intentions of many. Finally, the conclusion underlines the mediation of Christ, since the prayer of the assembly ascends to the Father “through Jesus Christ” who is our High Priest and Advocate

In the liturgical renewal that took place following the Second Vatican Council, an effort was made to restore several of the elements of the earlier unique functions of the Collect by having it follow a time for silent petition and also by stipulating that it is not to be followed by additional requests or commemorations.

Our Seasonal Missalette contains the Opening Prayers for all of the Sundays in the period covered by the Missalette. We are asked to study them to see the manner in which they follow prayer format and to note the manner in which the theme of the Mass for each Sunday is treated.