

INWARDLY DIGEST
THE PRAYER BOOK AS GUIDE TO A SPIRITUAL LIFE

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Praise for *Inwardly Digest*:

The Prayer Book as Guide to a Spiritual Life

Too often, *The Book of Common Prayer* is open to a few familiar pages on Sunday and closed the rest of the days, with little regard to the deep, transformative spirituality inside. With humor, deep reverence, and academic insight that is anything but dry and boring, Derek Olsen reminds us of the breath of the Spirit, the lives of the saints, the love of Jesus, and the magnificence of God held in the words, silence, and worship of our *Book of Common Prayer*. Clergy and laity should read this to discover and re-discover the daring words and liturgies of our faith spanning eons and to engage the prayers and worship of our faith.

—LAURIE BROCK

Episcopal priest and author of *Horses Speak of God: How Horses Can Teach Us to Listen and be Transformed*

Derek Olsen is the patron saint of the overlooked; campaign manager of the undervalued; tour guide to the taken for granted. His patient, scholarly watchfulness and his gift for rendering complex ideas in clear, concise prose make *Inwardly Digest* an insightful guide to *The Book of Common Prayer* and a sure and steady introduction to Anglican spiritual practice.

—JIM NAUGHTON

Founder of Episcopal Café and
partner of Canticle Communications

to celebrate whatever season the Church happens to be moving through. But these days can be opportunities to celebrate saints, whether local or universal or to lift up a particular doctrine or intention through the use of the *Propers for Various Occasions*.

CHAPTER 4

THE COLLECTS

THE LITURGICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR

The Church Year establishes fundamental organizing principles that direct our common liturgical life. The Daily Office and the Eucharist both exist within and are guided by it. When we look back to the liturgies of the medieval period, quite a lot of material used to mark the liturgical year and its passage. Remember, before the mid-twentieth century and the reforms of Vatican II, there was no three-year cycle—only a one-year cycle that repeated in an unchanging fashion. In medieval books—taking those of tenth-century England as an example—each Sunday Eucharist had its own particular set of liturgically proper materials: four prayers (the opening collect, a prayer over the gifts at the offertory, a proper preface, and a post-communion prayer), two readings (an Epistle and a Gospel), and four or five minor propers (usually one or two-line biblical texts sung by the choir at the entrance, after the

Epistle, before the Gospel, during the offertory, and during the communion).

That's a lot of stuff. And it doesn't stop there either.

Turning to the Daily Office, parts of the Eucharistic prayers—especially the biblical readings—would be interwoven among the various elements. The Gospel in full would be read in the Sunday Night Office, and a line from it would usually appear before and after the *Song of Mary* (that is, an antiphon) at the Evening Office. The Epistle too might appear in Gospel canticle antiphons through the week and was frequently found tucked into the suffrages of the mid-day Offices. Of course, the opening collect of the Eucharist would reappear as the closing collect of each Office.

In Archbishop Cranmer's simplification of the liturgy and construction of the first *Book of Common Prayer*, most of these proper elements were swept away. In his 1549 book, he retained only four of the Eucharistic prayers: the opening collect, the Epistle, the Gospel, and the psalm sung at the entrance (otherwise known as the *introit*). In the even more radical revision of 1552, the psalm at the entrance was dropped as well. With the stripping of the Gospel canticle antiphons, psalm antiphons, and variable suffrages from the reformed Daily Offices, Cranmer eliminated the possibility of retaining the delicate tissue of interactions between the Sunday Eucharist and the Office throughout the following week.

The only unifying element from the Church Year cycle that held the liturgical experience of the Eucharist and the Office together was the collect.

Cranmer could easily have done away with this too—but he didn't. Instead, he worked his way through the Sarum Missal, translating and retaining many of its collects where they were in accord with his understanding of the faith,

crafting new collects where they were not. The English-speaking Church owes him a great debt of gratitude for this, because his work of translation and adaptation was masterfully done. Through him, we have access to ancient prayers that have sustained the Church over centuries, drawn into luminous models of prayer and praise.

Since Cranmer's day, prayer book people the world over have embraced the collect. Hundreds of collects have been translated, adapted, and composed to fill our prayer books and resources. Collects are not unique to Anglican churches, but they are a definitive aspect of our spiritual heritage.

While our last few prayer books have begun recovering seasonal elements in the Eucharist and the Office, the collect remains the single point of calendrical continuity that has the potential to unite the two liturgical services. Particularly as the one-year cycle has been replaced by a two-year Office lectionary and a three-year Eucharistic Lectionary, the collect remains the sole consistent element. The consistent practice of Anglican prayer books up to the present is the use of the Sunday (or prior festival) collect at the end of Morning and Evening Prayer. However, our current prayer book has made the use of the Collect of the Day optional in the Offices. I believe this is a mistake. The use and repetition of the Eucharistic collect within the Daily Office is the last common element that connects these two liturgical movements under the overarching aegis of the Church Year. Without this element, they become disconnected; we will have lost the intrinsic link, and the two services can be seen as two entirely different and unrelated devotions rather than the complementary pair that they were designed to be.

Collects can seem like just another bit of text—a sentence said by the priest as part of the opening stuff before we get to the real business of worship. On the contrary, I suggest that

these brief prayers have a particular importance and impact that far outweigh their brevity. Indeed, their very brevity helps pull together threads of scripture, doctrine, and the seasons in concise, memorable, and powerful little packages.

I'd like to explore collects from two different directions. First, we'll examine what a collect is. Second, we'll look at how the collects function within the liturgical year and serve as key unifying units.

WHAT IS A COLLECT?

The original meaning of the term collect is lost in the mists of liturgical prehistory. The earliest Roman books refer to these prayers simply as *oratio* or *orationes*; the Gallican books produced in Gaul (modern France) in the seventh and eighth centuries used the term *collecta*. The Latin word is closely related to the English word—something has been collected—but what? There seem to be three possible answers: One suggestion is that the term refers to the prayer that should be prayed after all of the people have collected together. Another is that the collect brings together in one succinct statement the principal themes of the service being celebrated. The third is that, after a bit of silent prayer at the beginning of the service, the celebrant prays this prayer aloud as a means of collecting together all of the prayers that have been prayed silently and individually. This last possibly reflects the practice of bidding prayers, which is of great antiquity. I favor the last, but we will probably never know for sure.

One current liturgist, Fr. Bosco Peters, emphasizes the third option in his description of the four parts of a proper collect when it appears as the opening prayer of the Eucharist:

THE BIDDING: The presider invites the community to prayer—
"let us pray" ...

THE SILENCE: This is the heart of the collect. This deep silent praying of the community is what the collect is collecting. No silent prayer and it is not a collect, there is nothing to collect. Without this silence the "collect" is reduced to merely another little prayer cluttering the vestibule at the start of our service.

THE COLLECT: After sufficient silent prayer the presider proclaims the collect, gathering the prayers of the community and articulating the prayer of the Church—the Body of Christ. As Christ's Body the collect is addressed in Christ's name, on Christ's behalf, to God the Source of all Being, in the power and unity of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN: The community makes the collect its own by a strong "Amen"—"so be it."¹⁶

His notion of a four-part scheme refocuses the collect as a summation of the whole community at prayer.

This is why congregational attempts to pray either the Collect for Purity or the Collect of the Day in unison fail. First, this is not an accurate reflection of how the congregation and the priest function in relation to one another. The collect is prayed by everyone even if only one voice is heard. Second, the beauty of collects often is in their alliteration and assonance—charming the ear by putting similar sounds close to one another—and through the rhythms and cadences—how syllables come together to form phrases and lines. Collects are intended to be chanted. You may not hear them sung very often, but the chant of the Church is their true vehicle. As a result, the rhythm is structured around the sounds and syllables that make them singable. This delicate aural aesthetic is undermined when a whole group attempts to move through it together.

As for the nature of a collect's essential character, Anglican writers have fallen over themselves for years singing its praises in extravagant ways. I find that one of the clearest and most helpful introductions to the collect comes from the radical theologian of the English Sarum Revival at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, Percy Dearmer. In his usual acerbic tone, Dearmer writes:

The collect is a definite literary form, a prose form with something of the character that a sonnet has in verse, but with a far more loosely defined structure; so that, though it is easier to make a poor collect than a poor sonnet, it is perhaps more difficult to make a good one. A collect is not merely a short prayer: many prayers are short—some, like the *Kyrie eleison* [Lord, have mercy], extremely short—but they are not collects; on the other hand, it would not be difficult, though the result would be unpleasing, to write a prayer of some length that kept strictly to the collect form.

Unity is the essential characteristic of the collect. To be good, it must have color, rhythm, finality, a certain conciseness as well as vigour of thought; but it must be a unified petition, or it becomes something else than a collect. We might indeed say that it must be one complete sentence, an epigram softened by feeling; it must be compact, expressing one thought, and enriching that thought so delicately that a word misplaced may destroy its whole beauty. We cannot safeguard this balance, which is so easily upset, by setting down any definite rules, such as that a collect must consist of four parts. There is a real danger of a notion like that obtaining currency and of everyone who tries to write a collect fitting his material into a Procrustean bed, and finding fault with every example that does not conform to his imaginary rule. As a matter of fact, many if not most of the finest collects do not consist of those four divisions.¹⁷

After airily dismissing the four-part structure of the collect, Dearmer goes on to explain it and clarify its importance (but doesn't number the final element giving him four where we

will speak of five). Dearmer makes some excellent points here; in particular, I'd like to take up two in the form of comparisons. One is obvious and explicit; the other is less so, but one that Dearmer would approve.

First, the collect is like a sonnet; second, the collect is like a haiku. Dearmer's comparison of the collect to the sonnet is quite apt. Sonnets are poems defined by a certain structure, rhythm, rhyme scheme, and topic. Certain poets have defined these parameters through particularly notable examples of the genre—namely Renaissance poet Francesco Petrarca and Elizabethan playwright William Shakespeare—and their work shapes the convention. Skilled poets are able to work within the form and experience the rules and structures as canvasses to define an area of play rather than rigid guidelines. Truly remarkable poets are able to bend or break the rules, subverting the form and their readers' expectations in order to achieve something sublime. And yet, this subversion works because the poets have grasped a deeper structure to which they are adhering beyond the basic guidelines.

The same is true of collects; there are rules and guidelines. The rules guide the process of understanding and crafting the collect. A collect generally consists of a single sentence. It may be a quite long sentence with several relative clauses thrown in, but it is a single sentence. As a result of being a single sentence, it has one main point—Dearmer calls it the “unified petition.” Then there are usually five components:

1. The Invocation. This is the naming of the Person of the Trinity to whom the prayer is addressed.
2. The Relative Clause/Acknowledgement. This clause often begins with a “who” and usually says something about the identity of God that will relate to the rest of the prayer; it often ends with a colon.
3. The Petition. This is what is being asked for.

Sometimes there may be a second petition that is related to the first. Classically this may start with “Grant” or “Grant, we pray...”

4. The Statement of Purpose/Result. This clause explains why we’re asking for what we’re asking for or describes what we hope will be the result of the request. This often starts with “that.”
5. The Ending/Doxology. We end by bringing in the rest of the Trinity (or, at the very least, Jesus).

Here’s an example of how these five parts break down on a common and well-known text, the Collect for Purity that appears in the early part of the Eucharist on page 355 of *The Book of Common Prayer*:

The Invocation	Almighty God,
The Relative Clause/ Acknowledgement	to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:
The Petition	Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
The Statement of Purpose/ Result	that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
The Ending/Doxology	through Christ our Lord. <i>Amen</i> .

The unifying concept here is that we are requesting the God who knows our secret thoughts to cleanse them for the proper worship of him.

Another example is the collect for the Fifth Sunday of Easter (p. 225):

The Invocation	Almighty God,
The Relative Clause/ Acknowledgement	whom truly to know is everlasting life:

The Petition	Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life,
The Statement of Purpose/ Result	that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life;
The Ending/Doxology	through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. <i>Amen</i> .

The unifying concept here is John 14:6, asking that we might know the truth in order to follow that way to share in life.

Dearmer throws in an example of a short prayer that is not a collect but could be confused with one. It was composed and distributed in England during World War I:

O Lord God Almighty, look down with pity upon those who are suffering the miseries of war. Have compassion on the wounded and dying; comfort the broken-hearted; make wars to cease; and give peace in our time; for the sake of him who is the Prince of Peace, even thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, this is a perfectly fine prayer—it’s just not a collect; there’s nothing wrong with it; it’s simply another sort of prayer following different guidelines that could be mistaken for a collect because it might appear on the surface to share some characteristics.

Let’s take a look at why it’s not a collect. It looks collect-shaped because it’s short, it starts with an invocation, and ends with a standard collect ending. However, what follows the Invocation isn’t a Relative Clause or an

Acknowledgement—it's a petition. And four more petitions follow on after that. After the first sentence and where each semicolon falls you could easily insert "Lord, in your mercy/*Hear our prayer.*" This is a brief, private intercession rather than being a collect. Its unity is difficult to assess; generally speaking, the prayer is about the miseries of war, but the content of the petitions is more wide-ranging than what we would expect to find in a collect.

This five-fold form is another example of how the prayer book teaches us to pray. When you have spent a sufficient amount of time with collects and memorized the structure, it is easier to produce an extemporaneous prayer that follows these guidelines.

However, as Dearmer mentions, there is more to it than simply following the rules. Some collects don't follow this structure, like the collect for Proper 3 (p. 229):

The Petition	Grant,
The Invocation	O Lord,
The Petition, continued	that the course of this world may be peaceably governed by your providence;
Secondary petition	and that your Church may joyfully serve you in confidence and serenity;
The Ending/Doxology	through Jesus Christ Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. <i>Amen.</i>

While this is similar to the prayer Dearmer cites from *World War I*, the collect for Proper 3 has fewer petitions (two instead of five), and the thought is more unified.

Another differing structure is that of the collect for Monday in Easter Week (pp. 222-223):

The Petition	Grant, we pray,
The Invocation	Almighty God,
The Petition, continued	that we who celebrate with awe the Paschal feast may be found worthy to attain to everlasting joys;
The Ending/Doxology	through Jesus Christ Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. <i>Amen.</i>

This is probably the shortest a collect can be in terms of components and still be considered a collect.

The point here is that the not every collect of the prayer book fits the rules—nor needs to fit the rules—but they all share in the same fundamental concept and approach. The five-part structure is normal and typical, but it's not uncommon to see some variations. If we choose to compose our own collects, it's good to stick close to the rules, but they need not be considered straight-jackets either.

Just as a collect has rules regarding its form, elements, and content as a sonnet does, there's something about its character that is also like a haiku. While the classical Japanese poetic form has rules, the central experience of a haiku is that it is very short—only eighteen *on* (which are roughly comparable to syllables). A haiku is unified and has a seasonal reference. A good haiku evokes an effect. The use of language is intentional and particular. Because it is so short, every word matters; the placement of every word matters. While the seasonal reference is an important part, many Westerners miss them because specific words or turns of phrase have seasonal resonance within Japanese culture. The master Bashō demonstrates these elements (in William J. Higginson's translation):

old pond...
a frog leaps in
water's sound

It deftly creates a single experience, the translator's first line setting a scene, the second providing a glimpse of action. Rainy springtime is evoked by the frog—but the frog itself is part of what makes the poem what it is. Classical Japanese poetry often uses this kind of a frog for its haunting call particular to springtime; Bashō keeps this musical frog silent but gives the water a voice instead!

A good collect should be like a haiku in that it gives a unified experience, communicating a single, self-contained thought. Furthermore, this thought may be allusive, using loaded language to point outside of itself to references that a culturally literate interpreter should pick up. Finally, a good collect should leave us with a feeling, an intention, or a resolve to enact that for which we have just prayed. Let's return again to Cranmer's collect for the First Sunday of Advent (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 211):

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*.

The unified concept here is about receiving the grace to turn from darkness to light and to live according to the light in the presence of Christ, teacher and judge. The language of light and dark connects to key Advent themes where the coming of Christ is often spoken of as the coming of light and the dawn (...a people who have walked in darkness

have seen a great light...; more than watchmen for the morning...; sleepers, awake!; ...be watchful...; etc.). Cranmer also is making a very specific biblical allusion. In the one-year lectionary cycle that he knew, the Epistle for Eucharist on Advent 1 was invariably Romans 13:8-14, which includes these verses:

Besides this, you know what time it is; how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day... (13:11-13a).

The collect's phrase foreshadows the Epistle, and, when the collect was repeated throughout the week after hearing that Epistle, the connection would have been remembered. (In our current three-year cycle, this Epistle only appears on Advent 1 in Year A.) The season, the scripture, and the practice of the moral life are united in the collect.¹⁸

Note, too, that the structure is altered a bit from the usual. There is no Acknowledgement following the Invocation; however there is a relative clause in the petition that could easily be one. This is what would happen if we attempted to “fix” the collect:

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*.

What gets lost here is the effect of the multiple comings of Advent. Cranmer's collect creates a balanced structure

given to do. It is interesting to note in the word cloud the size of the word “things”—stuff matters! It would probably require another study to analyze the specific ways in which the word things is used throughout the collects, but I see this as a basic reminder of the spiritual importance of incarnate reality. In the prayer book’s language, we are not just spirits that think ideas; we are bodies, passing through the created world into which God entered in frail flesh.

The final point to note about collects is that, just as particular poems take on a life of their own and shape the cultural vocabulary, the same is true of collects. The collects of the prayer book span an enormous amount of Christian history. When Cranmer prepared the first *Book of Common Prayer*, he took most of the collects directly from the Sarum Missal and Breviary. Many of these, in turn, went back to the Gregorian and Gallican liturgies that spread throughout the Christian West in the seventh and eighth centuries. Those that Cranmer found objectionable he either adapted or replaced entirely with compositions of his own. As time went on, more collects were added by significant figures in Anglican history like Bishop John Cosin who played an influential role in the construction of the 1662 English prayer book that is foundational for many colonial prayer books and is still England’s official text. More recent collects have been added from around the world. Other collects go back to the earliest Western sources in the Leonine sacramentary, which scholars date to the sixth century.

Many of the collects that we read have been forming Christian theology and spirituality for well over a thousand years. It’s one thing to claim continuity with the Christian tradition of the ages; it’s another to demonstrate it—and our collects do. They provide a direct connection with the oldest streams of the tradition enriched by fertilizations from later ages.

COLLECTS AND THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Having taken some time to explore the collect form, let’s turn to how the collects function to give a more concrete sense of shape to the liturgical year.

While the prayer book is filled with a variety of collects, the most influential are those appointed for Sundays and the principal feasts. This is because they get repeated so often in practice. A collect appointed for a regular Sunday can be prayed at least fifteen times over the course of the week: In addition to the Sunday Eucharist, it can be repeated every day of the week at Morning and Evening Prayer. The repetition is both intentional and important. The Anglican tradition is not confessional in a technical sense; that is, our beliefs are not established by a confessional document in the same sense that the Lutheran and Reformed churches are.²² The center of our unity is the prayer book, and the collects as bite-sized crystallizations of doctrine, interpretation, and practice are a primary source of our theology. Repeating them day after day, week after week, year after year, instills a shared theological vocabulary within the praying community.

As a result, maintaining the weekly repetition of collects is a significant part of how we acquire and recall our theological heritage. In recent years, there has been a tendency to multiply collects. With the introduction of a more complete sanctoral calendar in the current prayer book and in *Lesser Feasts & Fasts*, more and more Days of Optional Observance are receiving their own proper collects. Collects have also been provided for every day of Lent and many of the days of Easter. Incorporating these new collects alongside a commitment to the faithful use of the Sunday collects—particularly in the Daily Office—is a challenge. There are two main options: The first is to retain the Sunday collects to the exclusion of the supplementary material. The second is to use both: The

supplementary Collect of the Day would be used first, the weekly collect would then follow.

Short yet substantial, the collects are ideal candidates for memorization. As each Sunday rolls around, I try to take a few minutes to memorize the collect. As I move through the week, I can stop and reflect on it, rolling its words around in my mind. Instead of passively receiving the piety and theology of the prayer book, I can actively engage it in my life of prayer and daily experience.

THE SEASONAL COLLECTS

There is another way that the collects reinforce the liturgical year. Starting with the English prayer book of 1662, several collects were appointed to serve as seasonal collects. A note with the Collect for the First Sunday of Advent designated that it should be read after the Collect of the Day throughout Advent:

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 211).

A similar note with the Collect for Ash Wednesday required that this collect be read after the Collect of the Day through Lent:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us

new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 217).

The Collect for Christmas, given its own octave, was appointed to be read every day after the Collect of the Day until the Feast of the Circumcision:

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born [this day] of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 213).

This concept greatly expanded in the American 1928 prayer book: The collects for Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, the Ascension, Pentecost, and All Saints Day were all given octaves—for the whole week following the feast, these collects were read after any other appointed collect falling in this time. Thus, on the Sunday after All Saints, the congregation would hear first the collect appointed for the Sunday, then the collect appointed for All Saints Day. This accomplished two things: First, it emphasized the importance of these feasts; second, as more collects were introduced—as in Holy Week—the repetition of the octave collect helped give a better defined shape to the period. The current prayer book no longer requires these seasonal or octave collects, but they remain an effective practice for reinforcing the seasons and feasts.

CALENDAR CONCLUSIONS

The prayer book offers the Calendar as a means of giving deliberate structure to the Christian experience of time. By shaping our common life around major festivals—Easter preeminent among them—we give festal expression to core truths about the God with whom we are in relationship. Key elements of the creeds are underscored and unpacked in the liturgies and the seasons supporting them: the Incarnation of Jesus in Christmas; his suffering, death, and burial in Lent and Holy Week; his Resurrection at Easter; his ascension with the Ascension; the Holy Spirit in Pentecost and the time following; the return of Jesus as Lord of Time in Advent.

The seasons train us in the central religious affections—ways of being that are composed of emotions, thoughts, understandings, and deliberate choices about how we lead our lives and pattern them after Jesus and the saints. These seasons of focus are not meant to be emotional straightjackets but more intensive times of examination and discovery.

The sanctoral aspect of the Calendar invites us to reflect on the person and virtues of Jesus as they have been incarnated in his followers and friends. This great cloud of witnesses who share in our Baptism continue in the risen life of Jesus Christ and remain as fellow witnesses and ministers with us. They support us with their examples and prayers as we join in one great company around the throne of God.

Lastly, the collects remain a central point of connection. In addition to providing a prayed point of continuity between our Eucharists and the Daily Offices, they communicate the themes and doctrines of the seasons. Through their allusions, they draw us deeper into meditation on the scriptures and the teachings of the Church. Tight, compact, luminous objects of devotion, they are the perfect size for memorization and rumination as we seek to live a life attentive to God.

NOTES

- 1 Modern Christians are often surprised to learn that the Jewish and Roman opponents of early Christianity did not dispute that Jesus was a wonder-worker; rather, they believed that the wonders he accomplished were attributable to either demons or sorcery (or both). See, for instance, Origen's *Against Celsus*, Book 1.68 and 71, Tertullian's *Apology* ch. 22, as well as the charges recorded in the Gospels themselves (Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15; John 10:20-21; etc.).
- 2 This antiphon is appointed in some old breviaries for use in the Lauds (morning) Office on Epiphany. It also appears in *Saint Augustine's Prayer Book*, pp. 219-220.
- 3 Don Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections* (Cleveland: OSL Publications, 1980).
- 4 There are forty uses of the term holy one(s) (*hagioi* in Greek) in this sense of saints within the Pauline letters. Examples are Romans 1:7; 12:13; 15:25; 1 Corinthians 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; etc.
- 5 This is why we have the tables. It's a lot easier to just use the tables rather than to try to calculate these things yourself. The bottom line is that the Gold Number identifies when the first full moon after the Spring Equinox falls. Easter then is the first Sunday after the full moon. The directions for how to use the Golden Number in combination with the Sunday Letter appear on pages 880-881 in *The Book of Common Prayer*.
- 6 One notion in Late Antiquity suggested that a person's life was somehow more complete or perfect if the date of their death fell on the day of their birth or conception. As a result, some church thinkers have argued that the first Good Friday therefore *had* to fall on the date of the Annunciation. I don't think that's necessarily the case but considering the two feasts/events in relation to one another is quite poignant, especially considering that Mary herself was present and privy to both events. One classic Anglican reflection on this conjunction is the poem, "Upon the Annunciation and Passion falling upon one day, 1608," by the famous poet and Anglican priest, John Donne. (When this conjunction does happen, the prayer book tells us to transfer the Annunciation out of Holy Week to the first free day after the second Sunday of Easter.)
- 7 While the liturgy in the West had generally been fairly uniform, the emerging technology of printing allowed the Roman Catholic Church to formalize liturgical texts in a way never before possible. While they allowed exemptions for liturgical traditions that had been around for a very long time, everyone else was required to use the new, officially printed editions.
- 8 We talk about the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent in the section on collects.

9 See above on the relationship between the lectionary first published in the 1979 prayer book and the Revised Common Lectionary. Many of the more Protestant Church bodies that participated in the construction of the RCL don't recognize or celebrate seasons in the same way as The Episcopal Church and the prayer book; as a result, the RCL doesn't observe the seasons in exactly the same way that the prayer book does.

10 To make things more complicated, General Convention passed a resolution in 2012 allowing parishes to use the lectionary compiled for the prayer book as long as they received permission from their bishop.

11 You may wonder where love of neighbor shows up in this list: It's tucked into the call to "prayer, fasting, and self-denial" (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 265). Fasting is not just going without food as some sort of holy diet. The intention is that you reduce the amount of food that you eat so that these resources can be given to those who do not have it; we abstain from food so that we can take the food or money we would have spent on food and offer it to charity. Furthermore, in the time that we save from not eating, we engage in prayer for ourselves and for the world, loving our neighbors in the passive act of intercession as well as in the active act of giving alms.

12 There's a hymn that is specifically about the putting away or burying of the alleluia during Lent—"Alleluia, song of gladness" (*The Hymnal 1989*, pp. 122, 123). In its original form it was sung on the evening before Septuagesima, the start of the now-suppressed pre-Lenten period. Because it's tucked away in the middle of the Epiphany hymns, though, its significance is easy to overlook. It is a great choice for either the Last Sunday of Epiphany, for a midweek service before Ash Wednesday, or simply for meditating upon in the days leading up to Lent.

13 *The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 270.

14 The permission to "[o]n occasion...omit" the Confession is found on *The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 359.

15 The permission to move a feast of title to Sunday in a green season or during Christmas is found in the third paragraph on page 17 in the Calendar directions.

16 Bosco Peters, "collect—four parts," n.p. [cited 8 March 2016]. Online: <http://liturgy.co.nz/collect>.

17 Percy Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship* (London: Mowbray & Co., 1919), 149-50.

18 Unfortunately, due to two different factors, the collects and scriptural allusions that might be contained rarely link up with the Gospel of the Day. First, the change from the one-year Eucharistic Lectionary to a three-year cycle means that, even when an attempt has been made to keep the traditional reading, it only appears one year out of three. Second, in the composition of

the 1979 prayer book, many of the collects were moved from their original location to a new place in the Church Year if a strong seasonal reference did not locate them. One clear example is the collect currently appointed for Proper 28; it had been the collect for the Second Sunday of Advent since the sixteenth century!

19 Romans 13:11.

20 The episode where Hollie (and her co-host Brendan O'Sullivan-Hale) discuss the word cloud is the episode for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, released on January 21, 2015 (<http://www.acts8moment.org/the-collect-call-for-the-third-sunday-after-epiphany/>). The discussion of the word cloud can be found between 4:00-7:40 minutes.

21 *Ibid.*

22 The 39 Articles were intended to be an English parallel to some of the continental Confessions, and the Church of England still requires priests to swear to them at their ordination. But they do not have the same character throughout the rest of the Anglican Communion as similar documents in other churches. For example, there is no mention of them in the ordination services in the current prayer book or the current Canadian book.