

# LITURGY BYTES

## What Else Changes in the Mass?



Did you ever realize that in addition to the Scripture readings, there are three prayers that change each week, too? The three prayers that I am referring to are the Collect, the Prayer over the Offerings, and the Prayer after Communion. They are short prayers that the priest says before or after the “bigger” or more obvious parts of the Mass. They are short and often follow the same pattern, so the words can still feel familiar and easier to ignore. However, they are always different.

**The Collect Prayer** – The Collect forms the final part of the Introductory Rites of the Mass, which also includes the Penitential Rite and the Gloria. By an ancient tradition of the Church, the Collect prayer is usually addressed to God the Father, through Christ in the Holy Spirit. Most of these prayers are incredibly beautiful and really deserve our attention. Notice how the language is very tender and warm as we prepare for the beginning of the Mass. They remind us of God’s fatherly care, while also encouraging us towards dignity and reverence.

**Prayers over the Offerings** (gifts) – The prayer reminds us that we are directly affected by the gifts that are brought to the altar. It is a reminder that what is about to happen in the Consecration is very sacred and not all symbolic. It is the same sacrifice of Christ offered on Calvary, and we experience it through the changing of the bread and wine to His Body and Blood.

**Prayer after Communion** – This prayer allows the priest to pray on our behalf that the Mass will not let us go unchanged, that the gift of the Eucharist will take effect in our lives. It is a beautiful reminder of what we have received at Mass and what we are called to do in serving others and bringing the Good News of Christ to all.

Have a blessed, healthy, and safe week ahead! ~~~~*Michele Hall*