

Collects

Collects are prayers. Every Sunday and every holy day has its Collect which ‘collects’ up the prayers of the people on that day’s theme and offers them to God in one succinct prayer. In the Eucharist, the Collect is the opening prayer and it concludes the introductory part of the service before we launch into the Liturgy of the Word. The Collect unites us with the rest of the Church of England since (in theory at least) all of us are using the same prayer at some point in the day.

When Common Worship was prepared it adopted a policy of looking back to the Book of Common Prayer for material for some of the Collects. This provided for continuity with the traditional liturgy but it also means that the Collects often sound a bit archaic and some of them are couched in extremely complicated language. Many people throughout the Church are unhappy with the Common Worship Collects because they don’t seem to fit naturally with the more straightforward modern language of the Liturgy itself. Last year some much simpler alternative Collects were published, you may have noticed that we were using them during the last three months of 2004. Unfortunately it seems that the alternative Collects, in their attempt to be more straightforward, have gone too far and sometimes they seem simplistic and banal.

Now we’ve returned to using the Common Worship Collects and we’d be glad to know what you think of them and of the simpler alternatives. Here are a couple of examples.

<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u>	
<p><u>Common Worship Collect</u> God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.</p>	<p><u>Alternative Collect</u> Eternal God, as we wait with Mary for the coming of your Son, bring us through the birth-pangs of our present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.</p>
<u>Baptism of Christ</u>	
<p><u>Common Worship Collect</u> Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.</p>	<p><u>Alternative Collect</u> Heavenly Father at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognize him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.</p>