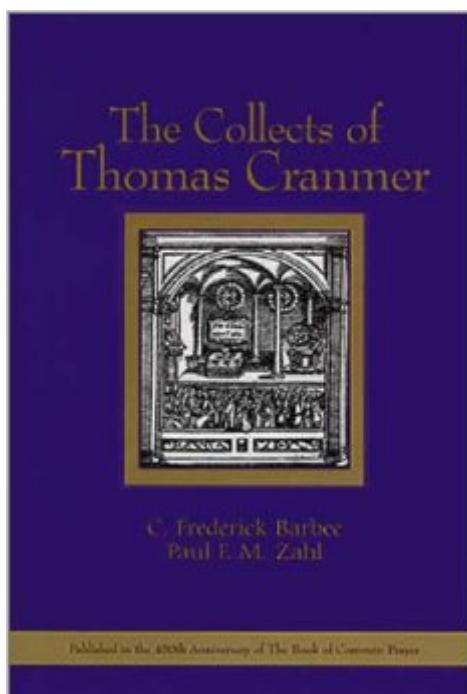


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The Collects Of Thomas Cranmer



Synopsis

Thomas Cranmer's Prayer Book of 1549 is a foundational document of the Anglican Church and a priceless part of English-speaking Christianity. Cranmer's unique gift of blending theological substance with simple, humble, and moving clarity has made the Collects (prayers) essential not only to the English liturgy but also to the pastoral tradition of the church: these prayers still remain a deep source of inspiration for Christians enmeshed in the everyday trials and testings of life. Published on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the Book of Common Prayer, The Collects of Thomas Cranmer presents this spiritually rich material in its original form and order. Compiled and presented for devotional use by C. Frederick Barbee and Paul F. M. Zahl, Cranmer's Collects are each followed by succinct commentary on their historical context and an insightful meditation crafted with contemporary Christians in mind. Including a significant introduction to Cranmer and his work by C. FitzSimons Allison, this beautifully produced volume opens afresh Cranmer's classic devotional treasure to modern believers from all communions. --This text refers to the Kindle Edition edition.

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Customer Reviews

If you would rather go to a performance of Shakespeare than one of the World Wrestling Federation; if you would rather listen to Beethoven than Metallica; if you would rather watch a film

directed by DeMille than Waters; if you would rather pray to God with a sense of awe and humility than with the never-ending "praise" that is all the rage; if you have been uneffected by the "dumbing-down" of the English language; then you should aquire this small book and consider joining the "praise" for the beauty within. Collects are "collective prayers" used in Anglican (Episcopal) church services to set the tone for the service to follow, and as a transitional device to bring the whole congregation (with many diverse thoughts and needs) together so that the service may proceed with focus. This set of collective prayers is organized into weekly readings following the Protestant Kalendar. However, you don't have to be Anglican to appreciate the absolute miraculous beauty and immense thought put into these prayers by Thomas Cranmer when they were written approximately 450 years ago at the time of Elizabeth I. The book is printed on beautiful ivory paper in a very nice type font, with violet colored woodcut letters beginning at the top of each page. The price is VERY reasonable for such a nice book as this. Critics in this "me, myself and I" generation would say that the tone of the language used by Cranmer is uneccessarily penitential and instills in people too much feeling of guilt. They don't stop to consider that if a person has reason to feel guilty...than perhaps feeling guilty would be somewhat beneficial. Does God forgive those who don't REALLY believe that they have sinned? Some day, all of us will find out! If you love the English language, and feel gratitude for all that God has done for you, then I think you'll agree that Cranmer's genius for talking to God with a profound sense of humility is refreshing today.

This Book contains the many beautiful Collects composed by Thomas Cranmer in their original form from the the First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549) for each Sunday and Holy Day in the year. Each Collect has an interesting historical note appended to it, detailing changes which have taken place at subsequent revisions such as 1552 and 1662, together with a most useful meditation. I heartily commend this excellent book to all traditional Anglicans and Christian people of goodwill. Attractively bound and presented it is an ideal gift for a Confirmation or birthday - or as a Christmas present.

I won't recite here who Cranmer was -- for that see one of the reviews above or MacCulloch's excellent biography. This is a truly practical book -- as a devotional aid for any Christian, as a help for pastors and other designing their churches' liturgies, and as an aid for family worship. The two most amazing things I notice here: 1. That Eerdmans is able to sell such a nicely packaged hardback for such an INEXPENSIVE price. 2. That so many folks wrote reviews of this book, and so many have voted on the usefulness of these reviews, and yet this book is only ranked 195,000th as

of my writing! I'm inclined to buy an armful more of these just out of principle.

There have been many books that have had the title 'Book of Common Prayer' since the first one appeared in 1549; it has been used continuously in one edition or another in the Anglican tradition since 1559; the 'main' edition remains the 1662 edition. The American church modified the Book of Common Prayer for its own use beginning shortly after the Revolutionary War, and has continued modifications in successive generations. However, it doesn't matter how far in time or place one gets from the original -- Cranmer's language still speaks through the translations and modifications. A bishop in the Episcopal church once said to me, 'We don't have a theology that we have to believe -- what we have is the prayerbook.' Please forgive the absence of context for this phrase -- while he would say that this statement in isolation is an exaggeration, and I would agree, nonetheless his statement serves to highlight both the importance of and the strength of the Book of Common Prayer, and the prayers contained therein, many of which conform to Cranmer's collects in many ways. To be an Anglican one does not have to subscribe to any particular systematic theological framework. One does not have to practice a particular brand of liturgical style. One does not have to have an approved politico-theological viewpoint. One can be a conservative, liberal or moderate; one can be high church, low church, or broad; one can be charismatic, evangelical, or mainline traditional -- one can be any number of things in a rich diversity of choices, and the Book of Common Prayer can still be the book upon which spirituality and worship is centred. The Book of Common Prayer is not, in fact, a book that changed my life. It is a book that changes my life. Even though it is not the primary book of my own church, it continues to provide for spiritual insight and development; it continues to guide my worship and my theology. It continues to help me grow.

There are echoes of Cranmer now shared by Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and other liturgical churches, in different combination and priority. The Collect is a particular form of prayer, and my particular favourite. Churches with high liturgical forms will recognise this form of prayer. Collects (pronounced call - ects) are short prayers that follow a general pattern, and are meant to collect the petitions and desires of the assembled group together into a common prayer. Collects can generally be said to follow a pattern of You - Who - Do - To - Through. You - Collects always begin by addressing the one to whom the prayer is directed. This can be Almighty God, O Lord God, Heavenly Creator, or a number of other phrases. The choice will often set a tone for the overall prayer. Who - The second part of the prayer identifies a particular aspect or attribute of God, the one to whom the prayer is addressed. It could call on God's mercy, God's memory, God's power, God's love, or any other aspect of God's being. Do - This is the heart of the collect. This is where one asks

the questions. The petition here is made simply and succinctly. To - This is the follow-through. Why should God grant the petition? Why would God want what is being asked? The request is made so that something may happen. Through - Christians pray in the name of Jesus, and here that is remembered in the conclusion of the prayer, in remembrance of the methods the gospels and other Christian traditions and writings indicate as proper methods of Christian prayer. Collects are generally fairly short, only a few lines. This book lists all of the standard liturgical collects of Cranmer's original Book of Common Prayer; one for each week, and special major feasts. This is a kind of prayer that has become a part of me. When was asked to put together a liturgy for a houseblessing for Episcopalian friends, there were rooms that called for collects that had not been written -- I wrote new collects and inserted them into the liturgy. 'Can you do that?' the householder asked, worried about the flow and the approval of the priest doing the blessing. 'I trust Kurt to write collects -- his probably belong in the BCP,' the priest said in response, and I appreciated her vote of confidence. That was perhaps the first confirmation to me of this sense of incorporation of the book into my life. If my collects came close to Cranmer's, it would be a real gift of grace. This book on Cranmer's collects is written in celebration of the 450th anniversary of Cranmer's first prayer book; it contains on each two-page spread the collect itself, a bit of history about writing, the holiday, or other relevant details, and then a full-page meditation. This is a book for use all year long. It is a wonderful tribute to a great book and great tradition.

This is a review of the Kindle edition. I bought this book to use as a devotional aid, but the titles for each Collect are missing. The way it is set up in the book, you cannot tell what season of the church year you are in, which makes the book practically very difficult to use. I returned it for a refund, and am considering buying the print edition, which looks a lot nicer. I hope the publisher fixes this problem, though - this would be a great book to have digitally for quick reference. The content, however, was fantastic from what I was able to read. I would certainly consider buying again if the problem was fixed.

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