

## **Spiritual practice: Collect Writing**

*Collects are short prayers that “collect” us; they gather us and our thoughts together. Collects help us focus our intentions as we begin. They follow a simple format:*

1. Identify the purpose of the collect.
2. Choose a name for God.
3. Describe an attribute or action of God.
4. Make a request of God.
5. Give your reason for making the request.
6. Name and praise God.

The Book of Common Prayer provides collects for Sundays, Saints’ Days, Holy Days, and Various Occasions.

Collects do not require this much formality. Your collect might be specific to this day or occasion, it might be specific to the season of the calendar or church year, it might be about what’s weighing on you in your personal life, or about a current local or global issue.

\*A wonderful resource for contemporary everyday collects is *Prayers for the People: Things We Didn't Know We Could Say to God* by Terry Stokes (Convergent Books, 2021). Here is one of his collects that shows the different parts of a collect from above (see numbers).

(1) *For before walking into Target*

(2) O Jehovah Jireh, (3) who satisfies our souls and makes our hearts content, (4) we beseech thee for a spirit of moderation as we walk into Target. Though the ambience, wide aisles, and \$1 section be prone to suck us in, let thy guiding hand keep us on mission. (5) When our carts overflow, help us to separate the wheat from the chaff. When sales and bargains compel us, help us to hear the voice of our bank accounts crying out for mercy. And may this department store remind us of thy provision for every department of our lives, (6) O Father, reigning with our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*