



St Michael & All Angels, Chetwynd

The Collect for the Third Sunday after Easter

(Book of Common Prayer)

Almighty God, who shewest to them that be in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness: Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may eschew those things that be contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Only one manuscript of the Leonine Sacramentary is known. It was discovered in the eighteenth century in the library of the cathedral chapter of Verona. In that sacramentary this originally Latin collect was appointed for one of the masses for April, and it clearly referred to those who had recently been baptised on Easter Eve. The prayer is also in the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, and in them it retained this connexion with Eastertide baptisms.

In the Sarum Missal it was the collect for this day, and it was translated into English for the 1549 Prayer Book remaining the collect for Easter 3 in that and successive Books of Common Prayer. Common Worship has also retained this prayer as today's collect, but as well as using modern English it changes those who are prayed for from the third person plural to the first person plural: "*May we...reject those things which are contrary to our profession*". It will be noticed that Common Worship alters "eschew" to "reject".

The Latin underlying "that be in error" could be translated as "*who wander*", those in other words who leave the right path, "the way of righteousness". That way of righteousness is the path through life guided by faith in Christ. The collect prays that Christians will remain faithful to the path they have chosen, and not wander off, but will "follow all such things that are agreeable to" what they have professed, "agreeable to" here meaning in agreement with or consonant with.

"All them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion" is a long and perhaps ponderous phrase representing the underlying Latin which could have been translated more simply as "*all those who profess Christ*". It is helpful though that 1549's fuller wording introduces the word "fellowship".

“Fellowship” serves as a reminder that everyone who is on the path of following the Christian faith belongs together. This is a shared not a lone journey of striving to remain true to what has been professed at our baptism, at our confirmation and in the creeds we recite in our worship. It is a shared journey, throughout which we have companions; we are to support one another on this path of faith, “the way of righteousness”.

James Graham
April 2026