

WEEK 7 “So fill our imaginations” FOR SELF-DEDICATION, Book of Common Prayer, p. 832

OPENING INVITATION *Read aloud the prayer slowly. After a time of silence each person identifies a word or phrase that catches your attention.*

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

If technology and time permit, watch the accompanying video.




CONTEXT & HISTORY OF THE COLLECT *Take a few minutes to discuss the context of the prayer.*

The date of this collect is not known, but its author is William Temple, archbishop of Canterbury (1942-1944), so it is a new addition to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. If there was ever to be sculpted a ‘Mount Rushmore for the Anglican Communion’, William Temple would deserve to be one of the figures included. Space does not allow a detailed biography, but further study of his life would be beneficial. One may believe that this is the only prayer in our prayer book that addresses the importance of imagination.

Temple was known as a theologian and philosopher. How might that background have affected Temple’s composition of this collect?

How does the context affect your understanding of the collect?

After allowing each person to share, take a moment in prayer and ask God to speak through the Word. Then read the collect again, together aloud, slowly. Now, let each person read over the collect silently while being on the lookout for three things to notice and perhaps share:

	Light bulb: This should be something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most or draws your attention.
	Question mark: Anything that is difficult to understand in the collect or a question that may be raised as a result.
	Arrow: A personal application from your life.

SCRIPTURE *Read aloud and consider these scriptural verses as they relate to the collect.*

Isaiah 6:1-8 or Jeremiah 1:1-19. While today’s collect is not explicitly found in scripture, Biblical stories of God’s call are fueled and filled by the Spirit of God who yearns for total, selfless surrender: “that we may be wholly yours, totally dedicated unto you.” For such an example, take some time with the story of the call of Isaiah or Jeremiah. How are the heart/mind/imagination/will involved in the call of God?

What other scriptural references can you think of that relate to this collect?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND CONVERSATION *These questions are only suggestions. Use one, all, or none. Create your own questions; let the group decide where the conversation might go.*

1. Someone once said that “a sacrifice is giving up what you love for what you love more.” Speak of a time when your dedication to God meant making a sacrifice of something you loved.
2. What role, if any, do you believe that one’s imagination has in a life of faith?

CLOSING *Pray the collect together as a group.*

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*