PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL
2020

Resource for Sundays, Feasts, Holidays, Weekdays, and Church Events

Year A

December 1, 2019–November 28, 2020

IMPORTANT USER INFORMATION

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has determined that tablet devices may not be used liturgically (that is, at the ambo/pulpit).

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INTRODUCTION

In this workbook, brief formulas are provided for the priest celebrant or another minister to use as the introduction to the Mass. In the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), we read, “The presiding Priest…[may] give the faithful an introduction to the Mass of the day (after the initial Greeting and before the Penitential Act)” (31). On Sundays, the rite of blessing and sprinkling of holy water, or the Penitential Act and a litany in praise of God’s mercy usually follows.

For the Prayer of the Faithful, a distinction is needed between the role of the priest celebrant and that of the leader of the intentions. The celebrant invites the assembly to participate in the Prayer of the Faithful and concludes with a prayer. A deacon, cantor, lector, or member of the faithful states the intentions (GIRM 71). The same person should not be both presider and leader. Moreover, we suggest that the leader of the intercessions be someone other than the reader. The Prayer of the Faithful is part of The Roman Missal, not of the Lectionary for Mass.

Musical assemblies should be invited to sing the response to the Prayer of the Faithful in a simple, inviting way, in keeping with the tradition of the Roman Rite. Several Mass settings include intercessions, and this moment in the liturgy is often an opportunity to honor the multilingual nature of our assemblies by using, for example:

“Escúchanos, Señor/Lord, Hear Our Prayer,” by Fr. Juan Sosa (Spanish, English)
“Exaudi Nos/Hear Us, O Lord,” by Rufino Zaragoza, OFM
  (Filipino, Spanish, English, French, Latin)
“Hear Our Prayer,” by Bob Hurd (English)
“Hear Our Prayer, O Lord,” by Rufino Zaragoza, OFM
  (Spanish, Filipino, Vietnamese, English)
“O God, Hear Us,” by Bob Hurd (English)
“Te Rogamos, Señor/Lord, Hear Our Prayer,” by Mark Purtill (Spanish, English)

If singing helps assembly members take part more fully, it fulfills its purpose. If singing reduces participation of assembly members, the music may be too complicated or otherwise unsuitable for the assembly.
The Categories of Intentions

Intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful fall into four categories: A) the needs of the universal Church; B) public authorities, and the salvation of the whole world; C) people burdened by any kind of difficulty; and D) the local community of faith, represented by the assembly. At least one intention from each category is to be included. Writers and leaders of the Prayer of the Faithful should become familiar with 69–71 in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Revised* (2010). It is available from OCP (ed. 30108143).

The intentions in these categories should reflect the creative freedom and character of the local church: “The intentions announced should be sober, be composed with a wise liberty and in few words, and they should be expressive of the prayer of the entire community” (GIRM 71).

A  *The needs of the universal Church.* This category includes petitions for the pope, bishops, and pastors of the Church, missions, Christian unity, and vocations to the presbyterate and religious life. Some examples are as follows:

That our Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons
grow in their love for the body and blood of Christ,
let us pray to the Lord:

For apostles of Christ who bear witness throughout the world,
and for missionaries in foreign lands,
let us pray to the Lord:

That preachers in our Church
preach what they believe and practice what they preach,
let us pray to the Lord:

For God’s people,
loved by God as a bride is loved by her husband,
let us pray to the Lord:

That all the people of all churches
come together in one Spirit, one Lord, and one baptism,
let us pray to the Lord:
**B** **Public authorities and the salvation of the whole world.** This category includes petitions for peace, leaders of government, good weather, the safety of crops, elections, and the resolution of economic crises. Some examples are:

That men and women in positions of trust seek justice and peace in all they do, let us pray to the Lord:

That our country become a place where people of all races are truly equal and at home, let us pray to the Lord:

For civil servants in every land, for firefighters, paramedics, police officers, and road builders, let us pray to the Lord:

That people of every nation use natural resources more wisely, and treat creation more respectfully, let us pray to the Lord:

That nations never again wage war on one another, and that people never again terrorize one another, let us pray to the Lord:

That the harvest of the season be abundant, and the produce of the earth be plentiful, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **People burdened by any kind of difficulty.** This includes those burdened by poverty or any other tribulation—the persecuted, the unemployed, the sick and infirm, the dying, prisoners, and exiles, among others. Some examples are:

For children at risk, and for all God’s little ones, let us pray to the Lord:

That all the sick, especially those suffering alone, experience the love and support of others, let us pray to the Lord:

For the poor, the hungry, and the homeless, especially those who have lost hope, let us pray to the Lord:
That the blind see, the lame walk, and the deaf hear, let us pray to the Lord:

For all the unemployed and underemployed, let us pray to the Lord:

For those who hunger to be fed, and those who are fed, but hunger for justice, let us pray to the Lord:

That all whose lives are in danger, especially those unborn, receive strength and safety, let us pray to the Lord:

D The local community of faith represented by the assembly. This includes those in the Church preparing for baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, orders, and marriage; it also includes pastors, an approaching church mission, and deceased loved ones. Here are some examples:

That those preparing for baptism find Christ’s wisdom in this community, let us pray to the Lord:

That this church be a haven for all in need, let us pray to the Lord:

For the young people of our community, and for all members of this church, let us pray to the Lord:

For those who have died from hunger, neglect, or abuse, and for our loved ones who have passed from our midst, let us pray to the Lord:

Note that the sequence of the categories is always the same: universal Church, world affairs, special needs, local church.

Greater flexibility is appropriate for ritual celebrations like weddings and funerals. General intentions should never be completely omitted, but the emphasis should be on the celebration itself (GIRM 70).
Structure

The intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful are usually expressed in one of three forms:

1. The full form (“For … that”), which announces those to be prayed for and what is to be prayed for (as on Good Friday: “For all Christians, that they celebrate unity around the table of the Lord”).

2. A first partial form (“That …”), which mentions the favor to be requested, referring in only one word to the persons prayed for (as in the final section of the Litany of the Saints: “That all Christians celebrate unity around the table of the Lord”).

3. A second partial form (“For …”), which announces only those being prayed for (as in some litanic forms in both the East and the West: “For the unity of all Christians around the table of the Lord”). See DOL 239:1901.

The full form of the intentions (“For … that”) usually works better if reduced to one of the partial forms, either “For …” or “That …” Partial forms are less susceptible to wordiness, which works against the clarity and flow of the prayer. Partial forms are also less susceptible to a “hidden agenda.” For example, in “For members of all Christian traditions, that they learn to dialogue more honestly with each other,” “learn to dialogue more honestly” implies that they have not done too well so far. The purpose of the petition is not to point out the negative side of behavior but to emphasize a positive approach.

All intentions within one set of Prayer of the Faithful should use the same form. For example, if the first intention begins with “For,” all the intentions that day should begin with “For.” A consistent pattern encourages a fuller, more confident response from the assembly.

Intentions from the assembly can be collected in a book like Hear Our Prayer (OCP edition 11824). These petitions should be reviewed in advance for proper structure and appropriateness.
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 1, 2019

INTRODUCTION TO THE CELEBRATION

God calls us together in this new season of hope.
Let us lift up our hearts in joyful expectation of the promised One.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, our light in days of darkness, Lord, have mercy.
Christ Jesus, our hope in times of struggle, Christ, have mercy.
Lord Jesus, our promise from God on high, Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Priest Celebrant

We bring to God the longing of our hearts,
and our desires for the well-being of all God’s family.

Deacon or Lector

A For the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the world,
for abundant graces in this holy season,
let us pray to the Lord:
B For civic leaders and public servants,
for a heartfelt commitment to the common good,
let us pray to the Lord:
C For those rebuilding after natural disasters,
for generosity in those who remain unharmed,
let us pray to the Lord:
   For the lonely, the lost, the poor, and the sick,
   for hope, help, and healing,
   let us pray to the Lord:
D For all who gather at this table,
for all who await the Lord’s coming into their lives,
let us pray to the Lord:

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Priest Celebrant

God, Father of heaven and earth, you hold the centuries in your hand.
Free us from the darkness of sin,
and lead us into the light of your presence.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
ASH WEDNESDAY

February 26, 2020

INTRODUCTION TO THE CELEBRATION
We are called in this great baptismal season to be reconciled with God and one another.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Priest Celebrant
We bear on our foreheads the sign of our repentance. Let us open our hearts to God's mercy.

Deacon or Lector
A That all believers bear humble witness to the Gospel through prayer, sacrifice, and service to others, let us pray to the Lord:
B That governments make amends for violating the human rights of citizens or strangers, let us pray to the Lord:
C That those who live with loneliness and isolation find comfort and solace during this season of grace, let us pray to the Lord:
D That the sick and those who are soon to die find healing and hope in the ministry of their caregivers, let us pray to the Lord:

Priest Celebrant
Covenant God, we claim your promised mercy. Let your Spirit cleanse our hearts and grant our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
THE ASSUMPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: AT THE VIGIL MASS

August 14, 2020

INTRODUCTION TO THE CELEBRATION

Holy Mary was raised body and soul into heaven.
Rejoice, O holy Temple of the Word.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, Alpha and Omega, Lord, have mercy.
Christ Jesus, promise of ages, Christ, have mercy.
Lord Jesus, source of light and life, Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Priest Celebrant

As children of the Blessed Mother,
we bring our needs to God.

Deacon or Lector

A That Christians everywhere turn to Mary with confidence and love,
let us pray to the Lord:

B That governments recognize and guard
all who labor on behalf of women and children,
let us pray to the Lord:

C That all grow in respect for life
from conception to natural death,
let us pray to the Lord:
That all who will die this night find peace,
especially those who will die alone,
let us pray to the Lord:

D That all in this eucharistic community
eagerly share the comforting hospitality of Christ,
let us pray to the Lord:

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Priest Celebrant

O God of gracious goodness, you raised your Mother to heaven.
Hear our intercessions in the name of Mary’s Son, Christ our Lord.