

Preparing the Prayer of the Faithful

Having been nourished by the word of God, the faithful pour out their petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful for the needs of the entire Church and for the salvation of the whole world.

In the Prayer of the Faithful, the people respond in a certain way to the word of God which they have welcomed in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all. It is fitting that such a prayer be included, as a rule, in Masses celebrated with a congregation, so that petitions will be offered for the holy Church, for civil authorities, for those weighed down by various needs, for all men and women, and for the salvation of the whole world.

As a rule, the series of intentions is to be:

- a. for the needs of the Church;
- b. for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;
- c. for those burdened by any kind of difficulty;
- d. for the local community.

Nevertheless, in a particular celebration, such as Confirmation, Marriage, or a Funeral, the series of intentions may reflect more closely the particular occasion.

...The intentions announced should be sober, be composed freely but prudently, and be succinct, and they should express the prayer of the entire community.

GIRM 69–71

Some Questions

- Do the Biddings of the Prayer of the Faithful reflect what people are mindful of from their lives?
- Do they sensitively pick up words or themes from the scripture readings and the homily?
- Is responsibility for their preparation shared?

Further References

*Roman Missal, Appendix III:
Sample formulas for the General
Intercessions*

Lectionary for Mass: Introduction: 30–31

Celebrating the Mass: 171–173

Practical Points

- The response the biddings evoke is petition rather than praise, thanksgiving or repentance
- Familiar responses to the biddings include: *Lord, in your mercy/Hear our prayer* and *We pray to the Lord/Lord, hear our prayer*
- Simple sung responses can enhance the Prayer
- The presiding priest invites the people to pray and concludes the prayer with a Collect; the Biddings are announced by a Deacon or reader
- The prayer takes place after the bidding has been read and before the response - allow time for the silent prayer which people have been invited to offer

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Questions for Groups

1. What is good about current practice?
What concerns do you have?

4. Who is most directly involved in these matters, e.g. liturgical ministers?
What formation/information is necessary to engage them in the renewal of current practice?

2. In what ways does the documentation affirm or challenge your current practice?

5. How will the assembly be engaged in the process?
What, in particular, needs addressing at Sunday and/or weekday celebrations?

3. Prioritise the issues you have identified.

6. How will you know whether the formation has worked?