

RELIGION | Prayers of the Faithful



Information for Teacher

Background

When the Mass was revised after the Second Vatican Council, the Church restored what the bishops called "the universal prayer or prayer of the faithful." They wrote, "*By this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all people, and for the salvation of the entire world.*"

This prayer has three important characteristics:

1. It is a petition addressed to God. It is not an expression of adoration or thanksgiving, nor praise of a saint. It is also not explicit instruction on truths of faith or religious obligation.
2. It is a petition to God chiefly for blessings of a universal kind. It is a prayer for the whole Church, the world, and those with various needs. However, it is also appropriate to pray for the faithful who make up the assembly.
3. It belongs to the whole congregation. We all pray for every intention, responding together to each invitation to "pray to the Lord." It is also for this reason that we will incorporate intentions submitted by individuals in the community.

Samples of each Category of Intention

Prayers for the needs of the Church: All bishops and pastors Priests, deacons, and religious of the diocese People of the parish Church's ministers Unity of all Christians Vocations

Prayers for public authorities and the salvation of the world: Government officials in this and every country Those who lead and defend us National, state, and local officials End to war and civil strife Peace and justice Reconciliation among nations and peoples Good weather and bountiful crops Solutions to socioeconomic problems

Prayers for those oppressed by any need: Those suffering from persecution or injustice The hungry, homeless or unemployed Prisoners, hostages, and refugees Victims of violence or disaster The young and the old Parents and children The sick, infirm and dying

Prayers for the local community: Those to be baptized or confirmed Those preparing for ordination or marriage First communicants Those who have requested our prayers Those who have died

Prayers of the Faithful

Ask students to create 5 petitions each that meet the above criteria, explained on the Teacher Information sheet for this activity.

Compile the petitions to make a *Book of Petitions for our Global Community*. At the end of each school day, pick a student's work and have them read their petitions to the class as the closing prayer of the day.

