

A teacher's guide to The Prayer of the Faithful

What is it?

The Assembly's prayer of intercession for all of humankind - and especially for those in need.

In this prayer the local Assembly looks beyond its own needs to the needs of the whole Church and of the wider world.

An example

Priest's introduction

Dear brothers and sisters,
let us ask God the Father
who listened to the prayers of Jesus
to hear our prayers too.

Let us pray that Pope Benedict, Archbishop
Vincent and the whole Church show God's
love to the world.

(Pause while the Assembly prays quietly)

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray that all leaders will take care of
those who are most in need

(Pause while the Assembly prays quietly)

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for everyone who is lonely or
sick, everyone who is in prison,
everyone who is hungry or thirsty.

(Pause while the Assembly prays quietly)

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for our school, and especially
for the children who will be receiving their
first Holy Communion next Sunday.

(Pause while the Assembly prays quietly)

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Priest's Prayer

May your mercy, we ask you O Lord,
be with your people who cry to you.
What we ask of your love,
may we receive from your kindness.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

What is its structure?

1. **An invitation to the Assembly** to offer prayer to God the Father - said by the priest

2. **The Biddings** (which gives the Prayer its other title of 'The Bidding Prayers').

- These Biddings are addressed to the Assembly asking them to pray for the various intentions.
- The examples given in the Roman Missal all include 4 Biddings
 - a) For the needs of the Church
 - b) For the needs of the wider world
 - c) For those facing any difficulty
 - d) For the local community

Other biddings might be added which are related to the nature of the particular celebration - eg Advent, or the Beginning of the School Year.

After each bidding, there needs to be a pause for quiet prayer by the Assembly. This quiet prayer is what the whole of the Prayer of the Faithful exists for. There is no point if the Priest and Readers carry out their role but do not allow the time for the Assembly to offer their prayer.

3. **A concluding prayer** - said by the priest

Take Care

- Keep the biddings short and simple - so we all know what to pray for!
- Make sure the Priest's introduction and the Biddings are addressed to the Assembly - not to God!
- Make sure the readers are comfortable with the pause. (It should be about 10 seconds - time it with them.)
- Enrich the prayer with a simple sung responsory instead of the 'Lord in your mercy, etc', eg the Iona *Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.*

A teacher's worksheet for **The Prayer of the Faithful**

Prayer of the Faithful for

Mass for

on

at

in

Coordinator for Mass is.....

Priest is

Possible themes for the Biddings

Readers *(nb it is better for the Assembly to have one or two good readers of the Biddings than four who are less confident or competent)*

Draft for Biddings, Priest's introduction and Priest's Prayer

The proposed texts should be
passed to.....
for approval before.....