

## Petition Guidelines

Here is how the petitions should be structured/written according to the GIRM(General Instruction of the Roman Missal) <http://uscceb.org/liturgy/current/GIRM.pdf>

### *The Prayer of the Faithful*

*GIRM* (2002) no. 69. 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.

70. 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.

71. It is for the priest celebrant to direct this prayer from the chair. He himself begins it with a brief introduction, by which he invites the faithful to pray, and likewise he concludes it with a prayer. The intentions announced should be sober, be composed freely but prudently, and be succinct, and they should express the prayer of the entire community. The intentions are announced from the ambo or from another suitable place, by the deacon or by a cantor, a lector, or one of the lay faithful. The people, however, stand and give expression to their prayer either by an invocation said together after each intention or by praying in silence.

In addition, the USCCB's *Introduction to the Order of Mass: A Pastoral Resource of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy* (2003) specifies:

96. Enlightened and moved by God's word, all the baptized, gathered for worship by Christ the High Priest, share in his priestly intercession for all humanity. Because "the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well," [GS 1] the Church prays for her own needs, for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly those who are sick or have died.

97. Thus, even though the intentions may be quite concrete or particular in content, they should look beyond the concerns of the local congregation to the needs of the whole Church and of the wider world. In this way, they are a sign of the communion of the particular gathered assembly with the diocesan community and with the universal Church.

98. The priest celebrant directs the prayer from the chair. He briefly invites the people to pray, and at the end he draws their intercession in a brief concluding prayer. The intentions are proposed by a deacon, another minister, or members of the congregation at the ambo or another suitable place. After each intention, the faithful respond by silent prayer, a common response, or both. They affirm the concluding prayer of the priest with their "Amen."

## Petition Guidelines

- The Prayer of the Faithful is ordinarily included in all Masses.
- Both the priest's introduction and the proposed intentions are **addressed to the congregation, not to God. They are invitations or biddings to the faithful**, who then pray for the suggested intention in the silence of their hearts and in a common petition.
- These intentions should be short, clear, and objective enough for the faithful to comprehend and respond to without difficulty. The response they are to evoke is a petition rather than praise, thanksgiving, or repentance.
- On particular occasions, when other sacraments or particular rites are celebrated in conjunction with the Mass, the range of intentions may be more closely concerned with the occasion; but even so, the intentions should always include some that are general or universal.
- For each intention, the invitation to pray and the response may be sung, or the entire intention may be sung.
- Those who propose the intentions return to their places only after the completion of the concluding prayer.

Here are examples from Trinity Sunday.

- 1. For the Church, especially the Pope, bishops, and priests, that she may spread the love of the Trinity to all, we pray to the Lord.**
- 2. For civil leaders, that they be good stewards of their authority by in-acting laws which are for the common good, we pray to the Lord.**
- 3. For the sick and suffering, that they grow in endurance and character in uniting their sufferings to those of Christ and hence grow in hope, we pray to the Lord.**
- 4. For our local church community, that we grow in unity and thus more imitate the Trinity, we pray to the Lord.**
- 5. For those who are called to the priesthood, the diaconate or the religious life, that they respond to God's call with courage, we pray to the Lord.**
- 6. For those who have fallen away from the Catholic Church or who are struggling with it, that they know of its inherent wisdom in the Holy Spirit and be drawn towards it, we pray to the Lord.**
- 7. For those who have died, that they may praise the Trinity for all eternity, we pray to the Lord.**