

opportunity to pray for specific local needs and unite these to the prayers of the universal Church. At this time, we as individuals can make our own petitions, provided they are made with the proper attitude already outlined, so that they, too, can be taken up to God as part of the universal prayer of the Church. Our own petitions then become all the more powerful as a result.

Prayer for Personal Petition in the Eucharistic Prayers

All four Eucharistic Prayers contain commemoration prayers for the repose of the souls of the dead, and commemoration prayers for the living as follows.

Eucharistic Prayer 1 contains a prayer for the general needs of the congregation, prayed prior to the Consecration: "Remember, Lord, your servants and all gathered here .. for the redemption of their souls, in hope of health and well-being" .



Eucharistic Prayer 2 offers a general prayer "Remember, Lord, your Church spread throughout the world".

Eucharistic Prayer 3 specifically offers up the prayers of the congregation, after the consecration: "Listen graciously to the prayers of the family whom you have summoned before you" .

Eucharistic Prayer 4 offers prayers for defined groups of people: "Therefore, Lord, remember now all for whom we offer this sacrifice .. those who take part in this offering, those gathered here before you, your entire people, and all who seek you with a sincere heart" .

Personal Eucharistic Petitions

The most appropriate time to make our personal petitions to God may be the period after the Gospel and before the Consecration, because they can then be included as part of our offerings to God. It is also the best time to remember that all our requests depend upon God's Will, which is always for our good. Our petitions should also, of course, be pleaded after receiving Our Lord in Holy Communion when he is actually present within us.

The Mass

"Do This In Memory of Me"

Reminding Ourselves of The Mass' Uniqueness and Beauty

4. The Mass as a Prayer of Petition



The Mass is the Most Important Part of the Church's Liturgy

The Liturgy consists of those public acts of worship that unite all Catholics together, all those living everywhere in the world as well as those who have died, the angels, the saints and Our Blessed Lady, in a truly magnificent Communion of Saints and, in turn, this Church of Christ becomes united with the Blessed Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit

In the Mass we are, therefore, in the greatest sense possible on this earth, part of the Mystical Body of Christ

The Paschal events of Jesus' Last Supper, his Death and Resurrection are re-presented, as if we were actually present at the time of their historical occurrence. That is why the Mass is regarded as being sacrificial.

In the Mass, there is the real presence of Jesus

As we go to receive Holy Communion, we go to receive Our Lord Jesus within us. Therefore, approach him with the humility of love and fear, as if we were walking towards God for our own judgment.

The Structure of the Mass



Introductory Rites

Opening Antiphon
Greeting
Penitential Rite
Gloria
Opening Prayer 'Collect'

Prayer of Penance

Prepare to receive the Eucharist by asking forgiveness for our sins and by recognising that we are nothing before God without his love for us. Yet, if we are in a state of grace, because of God's love for us, we become everything.

Liturgy of the Word

OT/ Psalm/ NT
Gospel
Homily
Creed
Prayers of Faithful

Prayer of Petition

Scripture reminds us to have faith in God and to pray to him in total confidence. This does not mean our prayers are guaranteed to be answered in the way we want, but if we pray in humility, and are willing to accept God's Will, they will nevertheless be pleasing to him and a source of grace.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Prayer over the Gifts
Preface
Eucharistic Prayer
Consecration
Eucharistic Prayer cont.

Prayer of Praise

Our first duty is to praise God for himself, without any ulterior motive of gaining something in return. This is perfect love and praise of God.

Communion Rite

Lord's Prayer
Sign of Peace
Breaking of Bread
Preparation for Communion
Communion Antiphon
Distribution of Communion
Prayer after Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We must always thank God for what he has done for us, especially for the gift of himself in the Eucharist

Concluding Rite

Blessing
Dismissal

The Nature of Prayers of Petition

People have always prayed to God for their needs and intentions. The Old Testament, especially the Psalter, is full of such prayers. The belief is that because God loves us and cares for us he will grant us what ask for in faith, provided it is for our good. Jesus strongly restates this view in the Sermon on the Mount: "Ask and it shall be given, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you" (Mtt.7). Jesus emphasises that if we have total faith that what we pray for we shall receive, then we will receive it (Mk. 11).



Yet, genuinely humble prayers of petition consist not just in asking in faith for something, but also in recognising that it is equally important to accept the Will of God (Mtt.7), and his divine plan (Mtt.9).

In prayers of petition, then, there is this tension between our confidence that our requests will be granted, and our realisation that they may not be in accordance with God's wider plan for us. This is often difficult for us to accept, as we are tempted to think we know better than God about what is for our good. Is not that so? It is particularly difficult for us when we are confronted with suffering, especially that of someone we love very much, and we are praying for their recovery. The only answer is to pray in humility as well as in faith. Remember, this what Jesus himself did in the garden of Gethsemane: "I pray, Father, that this cup be taken from me. But not my Will but thine be done" (Mtt.26//Mk.14//Lk.22).

The Prayers of the Faithful or Bidding Prayers

After the Creed, our great prayer of Faith, the Prayers of the Faithful are said. It is especially appropriate that they are said at this time, because in the Creed we have professed our faith in the Word and power of God. We are ready, then, to offer our Bidding prayers in similar faith.

The Prayers of the Faithful are those of the universal Catholic community, for the needs of the world, and the Church, living and dead. It is also an