

St. Paul's Cathedral, Regina, Saskatchewan
Diocese of Qu'Appelle

Notes for Intercessors

The Prayers of the People, or Prayers of the Faithful, or Intercessions, are the culmination of the Ministry of the Word in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. They are the corporate prayer of the Christian community. Those who compose and lead the intercessions fulfil a major responsibility on behalf of that community, which, as a “royal priesthood” (I *Peter* 2: 9), offers to God prayers for the Church and the world. Leaders of the Prayers of the People need to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of their parish in worship. Here are some key points:

- **Intercessors are not solo performers – they pray *on behalf of the assembly*.** We keep our own preoccupations for our private prayer. We do **not** express our own political or social views. We avoid personal and poetic eloquence, as this may offend or embarrass some of the congregation.
- Intercessions normally include prayers for **the Church, the world, the nation, the local community, those in need, and the departed**. It is customary to remember the local bishop(s), other clergy (bishops, priests and deacons) and lay ministers. We also remember Donald, Archbishop of Regina (Roman Catholic), and Sid, Lutheran Bishop of Saskatchewan, witnessing to our ecumenical partnerships.
- The Synod Office provides **weekly intercessions for the diocese and the Anglican Church in Canada and abroad**. You do not need to read these word for word – select the main points.
- **Prepare the intercessions carefully and in advance.** We don't arrive at church and improvise! If we use the litanies in *The Book of Alternative Services* we should avoid repeating them word for word – they are intended only as a guide. And we do **not** invite the congregation to follow the text in the book (except for litanies 17 and 18, which incorporate detailed responses).
- The leader offers intercessions in the form of “biddings,” “petitions” or “intentions,” **each followed by a response from the assembly**. In an opening sentence the leader introduces the prayers and indicates what the response will be. *There must always be a phrase, such as “Lord, in your mercy, (hear our prayer)” to trigger the assembly's response – they can't be expected to guess their cue!*
- Of the nineteen litanies in *The Book of Alternative Services* (pages 110 ff.), only six – #1, #6, #8, #13 (Incarnation), #14 (Lent), and #15 (Easter) – have cues for the responses. The others should be avoided unless you can adapt them with clear cues/responses.
- **Biddings/responses must be clear and easy to follow.** If we compose our own, we must keep them **brief**. We can group special intentions at the beginning, or incorporate them in the biddings.
- **Keep the petitions short.** No lengthy rambles or harangues! And keep them down to a reasonable number – 6 to 10 petitions at the most. The intercessor is not there to give a sermon; that is the preacher's job.
- **Keep the intercessions general as well as brief.** Do not make them sound like the television news or the parish bulletin. If we mention specific events, concerns or individuals, we do so with restraint and sensitivity.
- Useful suggestions for each Sunday of the liturgical year for the Anglican, Lutheran and Roman Catholic traditions are found in the book *Intercessions for the Christian People* (ed. Gail Ramshaw, Liturgical Press, 1990). However, these intercessions can rarely be used word for word and usually need to be adapted.

- The list of local **people to pray for** is found in a small binder in the chancel.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Use the lectern microphone. Have a gentle, prayerful delivery, with appropriate pauses for reflection.
- **Feel free to call on the deacon for assistance.**

Here are some sample biddings – examples only, not a formula to follow.

Introduction

Let us pray for the Church, the world and our local community.

Our response to the bidding “Let us pray to the Lord” is “**Lord, hear our prayer.**”

For the Church

For the Christian Church throughout the world and for its mission of peace, reconciliation and healing, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for..... and for our companion dioceses of Lichfield and Musinga, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For Robert our Bishop, Gregory our Metropolitan, and Frederick our Primate; for Donald, Archbishop of Regina, and Sid, Lutheran Bishop; for all bishops, priests and deacons; for pastors and lay ministers; and for the whole company of the faithful, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the Nation and the World

For Elizabeth our Queen; for the Governor General and Lieutenant Governor (and/or Parliament and the Legislature); for the Mayor of this city (and/or City Council); for the Indigenous Peoples; for all who serve in appointed or elected office in our communities; and for those who guard the peace, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the victims of conflict, war and oppression, especially in (name of country or region), and those who minister to them, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the Parish Community

For this Cathedral Parish of St. Paul; for our mission to this diocese, this city, and our brothers and sisters in the First Nations, *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For Those in Special Need of Our Prayers

Today we ask your prayers for (names) *or* Let us remember those in special need of our prayers (names) *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all who have died in the pace of Christ and the communion of the Catholic Church, remembering today (names)... *let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

Conclusion

Concluding collects can be found in *The Book of Alternative Services* on pages 111 and 127 and in *Intercessions for the Christian People*.

Revised October 2018, Deacon Michael Jackson