

Cycle of Prayer — Model Intercessions

Introduction

The Cycle of Prayer was established by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in 1996 to incorporate the various Special Days of Prayer marked throughout the year. These days were included within a series of seasonal Intentions which also highlighted aspects of both Church and Society that should be held in prayer by the local community, for example, *New Members of the Church* in the Easter Season and *Those Who Suffer Persecution, Oppression and Denial of Human Rights* associated with St John Fisher and St Thomas More in June. One of the hopes in creating the Cycle of Prayer was that the call to prayer and action that the various intentions seek would be spread across a period of time rather than focus on a single day. Indeed, the liturgy of Sunday Mass should always have pre-eminence and not be distorted by an external theme.

Within the Mass the Prayer of the Faithful is a place for the local community to offer its intercession to God. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (70) gives the following guidance for their content. They should include:

- The needs of the Church.
- Public authorities and the salvation of the whole world.
- Those burdened by any kind of difficulty.
- The local community.

The various Intentions of the Cycle of Prayer will fall under one or more of these categories and therefore the Intention should not dominate or be the focus of the whole of the Prayer of the Faithful. One or two intercessions will be all that is needed.

In many parishes and communities people carefully craft the intercessions following reflection on the scripture and texts of the day, and on the needs identified in GIRM 70. The Liturgy Committee has offered guidance on the writing of the Prayer of the Faithful which is available on the Liturgy Office website.

This document offers a couple of model intercessions for the Prayer of the Faithful for all the Intentions of the Cycle of Prayer and for a number of other dates and intentions which occur each year. They can be used as they are or adapted according to the needs of the liturgy. As well as the Prayer of the Faithful at Sunday Mass they could be included in the bulletin or used in other contexts such as school assemblies.

For further information

Cycle of Prayer: <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/Index.shtml>

Prayer of the Faithful:

<http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Documents/Intercessions.shtml>

Advent–Christmas

Openness to the Word of God

especially on Bible Sunday (2nd Sunday of Advent)

- For our openness to the Word,
so that we may hear God speaking to us each day.
- For all called to proclaim the word
that they may communicate God’s message to all.

Migrants and Refugees

especially on Migrants’ Day (3 December)

- For our society,
may it always welcome the stranger.
- For those countries from which asylum seekers and refugees have fled,
may all work together for peace and justice.

Expectant Mothers

especially on 4th Sunday in Advent

- For all who are awaiting the birth of a child,
may they be given patience and strength.
- For all who work in maternity units and with parents,
may they always recognise and cherish the gift of life.

Ordinary Time — Winter

Peace On Earth

*especially on the Day of Prayer for Peace (2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time)
and on Racial Justice Day (3 Sundays before 1st Sunday of Lent)*

- For peace between nations,
a lasting peace with justice.
- For individuals, groups or movements that promote war and conflict,
that Christ, the Prince of Peace, might turn hearts to a culture of life.

Christian Unity

especially during the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity (18–25 January)

- For unity among all the followers of Christ,
a unity founded on truth and compassion.
- For the churches to find a common voice
to speak on matters that affect the whole of society.

Consecrated Life

On the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (2 February)

- For vocations to the Consecrated Life,
may those whom God calls find a place of contemplation and nurture.
- For all committed to the Consecrated Life,
may their prayers and their actions give life to the Church.

Victims of Human Trafficking

especially on the feast of St Josephine Bakhita (8 February)

- For all who are victims of human trafficking,
may they know wholeness and safety.
- For all who work with victims of human trafficking,
may they be agents of mercy and seekers of justice.

The Sick and Those Who Care for Them

especially on the World Day for the Sick (Our Lady of Lourdes, 11 February)

- For all who are sick,
may they be restored to fullness of health
or come to know dignity in their suffering.
- For doctors, nurses and all who care for the sick and the dying,
may they bring Christ's love and compassion to all for whom they care.

The Unemployed

especially on the Sunday before the 1st Sunday of Lent

- For all seeking work or unable to work through disability and illness,
may they place their trust in the God of hope and new beginnings.
- For politicians and all who work with the economy,
may they always remember the poor and those who have least.

Lent

Candidates for the Sacraments

especially on the Sundays of Lent

- Let us pray for those called to the Easter sacraments,
that they may find joy in the love of the Lord.
- For all who walk alongside the Elect and candidates,
for catechists, sponsors and Godparents,
may they be generous in faith and caring in support.

The Needy and Hungry of the World

especially on Lent Fast Day (Friday of the 1st week in Lent)

- For the poor and hungry of the world,
may they have access to the food they need to survive.
- For all who work for overseas development,
may they work alongside the poor bringing dignity and justice.

Women's World Day of Prayer

(1st Friday in March)

- For governments and legislators,
that they may establish and protect the dignity and equality of women
in society.
- For all women who follow Christ,
may they be guardians and advocates for the seamless garment of life.

Survivors and Victims of Sexual Abuse

(Friday in 5th Week of Lent)

- For all survivors and victims of sexual abuse,
may they find justice and come to know healing.
- For leaders of the Church,
may they lead with humility and mercy
and seek to protect the vulnerable and the least.

Penitents and Wanderers

- For the courage to face up to sin,
and turn to Christ.
- For all who are searching,
may they find their home in the Church.

Easter Time

New Members of the Church

- For new members of the Church,
may they grow in love and understanding.
- For priests, deacons, teachers and catechists
and all who form people in faith,
may they deepen their own faith through those whom they meet.

Vocations

especially on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations (4th Sunday of Easter)

- For vocations to the priesthood and the religious life,
may those whom God chooses be open to his call.

- For all people who follow God's call,
may they find fulfilment in the life they have chosen.

Human Work

especially on St Joseph the Worker (1 May)

- For all who work,
may they earn a just wage and be treated with dignity.
- For the stewardship of the earth's resources,
so that all may benefit for generations to come.

The Right Use of the Media

especially on World Communications Day (Ascension of the Lord)

- For all who work in the media,
may they broadcast with truth and integrity.
- For places and events that are forgotten by the news,
may they be remembered in our hearts.

The Church

especially on Pentecost Sunday

- For the Holy Father,
may he be a focus for unity and peace.
- For the Church of God,
that the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit may be given to all people.

Ordinary Time — Summer

Anniversary of the Election of the Holy Father

Kept in England & Wales on the Solemnity of St Peter & St Paul

- For our Holy Father, Pope N.,
may he lead the Church in service and truth.
- For all bishops,
may they teach with authority, govern with humility
and pray for the good of all.

Sanctification of Priests

Sacred Heart of Jesus

- For all priests,
may they live lives which are holy and true to their calling.
- For all involved in the formation of priests and deacons,
may they inspire them to deepen their love of God and the Church.

A Deeper Understanding between Christians and Jews

- For all people of faith,
that mutual respect and the promotion of peace may be a voice for good.
- For Christian and Jewish believers,
that their shared heritage of the divine Word of God
may enrich life and faith and deepen understanding.

Those Who Suffer Persecution, Oppression and Denial of Human Rights

especially on St John Fisher and St Thomas More (22 June)

- For the persecuted and voiceless throughout the world,
may the Church be a place where their voice is heard
and their dignity promoted.
- For those in authority,
that they may protect the rights of each human life.

Human Life

especially on Day for Life (2nd Sunday in June)

- For all who care for and nurture human life
from its very beginnings and growth to its final years.
- For legislators and those in authority,
may they respect and protect human life in all its stages.

Europe

especially of the feasts of St Benedict (11 July), St Bridget of Sweden (23 July), St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (9 August) who with St Cyril and St Methodius (14 February), and St Catherine of Siena (29 April) are Patrons of Europe

- For a deepening of knowledge and understanding
of our common heritage of faith.
- For an openness to the stranger
and a care for their needs.

Seafarers

especially on Sea Sunday (2nd Sunday in July)

- For those who sail the world to enable our safety and comfort
and for families left behind,
that they may know stability and peace.
- For an appreciation of the food and produce
which comes to us through seafarers,
that we may never take their work for granted.

Ordinary Time — Autumn

The Harvest, the Fruits of Human Work, and the Reverent Use of Creation

especially on World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (1 September) and on last Sunday in September or whenever Harvest Festivals are held.

- For a fair and equal trade, so that all may receive a just wage for the work of their hands.
- For politicians and all who make decisions that affect the future of the earth, may they safeguard the care of creation for future generations.

Students and Teachers

especially on Education Day (2nd Sunday in September)

- For the love of learning at the beginning of a new academic year, may we all desire to grow in our faith in God and our knowledge of the world he created.
- For teachers, catechists and all who share what God has done, may they always be open to deepening their knowledge.

The Spread of the Gospel

especially on Home Mission Day (3rd Sunday in September) & on World Mission Day (penultimate Sunday in October)

- For the courage to live lives faithful to the Gospel as missionary disciples of Christ.
- For the ability to recognise Christ in all whom we meet.

Justice and Peace in the World

especially on Harvest Fast Day (1st Friday in October)

- For tolerance and respect, for an openness to neighbours and strangers.
- For the broadening of our horizons and an awareness of what is happening in the world.

Prisoners and their Families

especially on 2nd Sunday in October and in Prisons Week (2nd Week in October)

- For all in prison and their families, that they may know the Lord's compassion and love.
- For the judicial system, may it practise both justice and mercy.

All Victims of War

especially on Remembrance Sunday (2nd Sunday in November)

- For peace and reconciliation between nations,
that enemies may put aside all differences.
- For all those who have died through war or acts of violence
in defence of our country,
may we never forget their sacrifice.

World Day of the Poor

especially on 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

- For the Church of God,
that it may reflect on how poverty is at the very heart of the Gospel.
- For all who work with the poorest in our society,
encouraged by the God of mercy,
may they bring hope and dignity to all in need.

Young People

especially on Youth Day (Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe)

- For young people,
may they grow in Christ.
- For all who work with young people,
may they show leadership and compassion.

General

On the Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination or Installation of a Bishop

On the date kept by the diocese

- For our (arch)bishop N.,
may he serve the flock entrusted to his care by word and example.
- For our diocese,
may we be a sign and instrument in the world of the presence of Christ.

Cycle of Prayer — Model Intercessions is a document of the Liturgy Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It can be found with related resources on the Liturgy Office website: www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/

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