
Universal Prayer / Prayer of the Faithful

Following are seven sets of examples/models of the prayers that are spoken at the wedding liturgy. They vary widely in style to give you a sense of what is possible. These prayers are a good opportunity to personalize the liturgy while remembering the needs of others in the midst of the day's joy.

If you would like to use one of these sets, let our staff know your preference. The wording can be customized and the names of sick or deceased relatives can be mentioned. If you would like to write your own prayers, guidelines for writing your own prayers are included. You will also find more information about these prayers on pp. 86-87 in the United in Christ book.

Option 1

For Christians everywhere, that the world may see our love for one another and come to believe. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For peace among nations, that there may be an end to the violence that divides us. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are marginalized or forgotten by our society, that God will use us to raise them up. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are part of our lives, our parents, friends, and companions along the way, and for all who have helped to bring us to this day. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For *(Groom's Name)* and *(Bride's Name)*, that the love they pledge to each other today may bring light and joy into their lives and the lives of others. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all our beloved dead, especially *[insert the names of those who have died]*. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 2

For the Church throughout the world and for the parishes of which *(Groom's Name)* and *(Bride's Name)* have been a part; *(Here you may optionally name the churches where you were baptized, received first Communion and confirmation, and other communities of which you have been a part)*. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our nation, state and city, and for those who serve in our government. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the poor, the homeless and the unemployed, and for all who suffer under persecution. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For *(Bride's Name)* and *(Groom's Name)* and for all married couples, for their faithfulness to each other and for their loving service of the Gospel. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For their parents and families, for their godparents *(option: put their names in here)* and for all who formed them in faith. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the sick, for those unable to be with us today, and for our deceased relatives. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 3

For the Church and those who serve the Church and for all people who preach and practice the Gospel of Christ. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Perhaps something like: For the Jewish people, the first to hear the Word of God, and for their continual growth in the love of God's name and in faithfulness to the covenant. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the outcasts and downtrodden of our city and our nation, and for churches and families who offer them refuge and compassion. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Lord's abundant blessings on *(Groom's Name)* and *(Bride's Name)* in their married life. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For their families and friends as we rejoice with one another today, and for our support of one another in times of need. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For family members who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith; *especially (here you may name deceased relatives)*. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 4

That the trust of *(Groom's Name)* and *(Bride's Name)* in God and in each other be a sign of hope for all people. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That partners in marriage everywhere affirm one another with actions based on mutual respect. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That those who experience difficulties in their marriage grow in loving communication with God and each other. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That the love of husbands and wives grow daily through honest expressions of affection. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That all of us celebrating the start of this marriage receive strength and inspiration for our lives. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 5

For the Church, those who serve in the Church, and for all people who preach and practice the gospel of Christ; may they lead us to deeper faith in God and a stronger love for others. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all leaders of government; may they be effective in achieving peace and eliminating poverty. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For (*Groom's Name*) and (*Bride's Name*), that they may have divine assistance at every moment, the constant support of friends, a warm love reaching out to others and good health until a graceful old age. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That they may be granted the Lord's peace, and the grace to bear faithful Christian witness in the world. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all married persons; may they continue to give, be able to forgive and find happiness deepen with the passing of each day. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That all Christians may reflect Jesus' love, and thus inspire their neighbors to a more generous life. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who are injured, sick, lonely, discouraged or oppressed; may they be strengthened by God's love and aided by God's people. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died; (*pause*)... *Especially (here you may name deceased relatives)*; may they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life. We pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 6

For leaders of Church and state, for heads of institutions, for heads of homes and households, that they will lead us and guide us in the search for God and the good life, and in the search for peace and joy — we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all married people: for those who married yesterday, for the new couples married today, for those who will marry tomorrow, That they may savor the joy of being together, warm love, friends, and a long life — we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all single people who seek a vocation full of life and full of love — we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the lonely old and the lonely young, for the hungry rich & the hungry poor, for the sick in body, mind and spirit, for the weakness in all of us — we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our relatives and friends who walk *with* us on life's journey, and for those who have gone *before* us to the other side of life. — we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Option 7

For our Church, to keep the promise of salvation— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our world, to keep the promise of peace— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our country, to keep the promise of freedom— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our parish, to keep the promise of discipleship— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our hearts, to keep the promise of loving— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our hands, to keep the promise of giving— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our lives, to keep the promise of growing— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For this couple, to keep the promise of marriage— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are sick, and all who have died, may *we* keep the promise of remembering— we pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Another Option: Writing Your Own Prayer Intentions

If you would like to write your own prayer intentions, here are some things to keep in mind.

- pray for guidance before you begin writing prayers
- the number of prayers can be anywhere from four on up; more than eight might seem a bit over extended
- shorter prayers are easier for the people to focus on
- when you are ready (but well before the wedding date), show the prayers to our church staff for review

Categories of Intentions

Intentions for the Universal Prayer / Prayer of the Faithful usually fall into four categories, in this sequence:

- A. the needs of the universal Church (*petitions for the pope, bishops and pastors of the Church, missions, Christian unity, vocations, etc.*)
- B. public authorities and the salvation of the whole world (*petitions for peace, leaders of government, good weather, the safety of crops, elections and the resolution of economic crisis, etc.*)
- C. people burdened by any kind of difficulty (*petitions for the sick and infirm, those burdened by poverty or any other tribulation, the persecuted, the unemployed, the dying, prisoners, exiles, etc.*)
- D. the local community of faith represented by the assembly (*petitions for deceased loved ones, approaching events, those preparing for marriage, baptism, confirmations, Eucharist, Holy Orders, etc.*)

At least one intentions from each category should be included. Some flexibility for creativity is appropriate, especially for special celebrations like weddings.

Structure

The intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful are usually expressed in one of three forms:

1. the full form (“For... that...”), which announces *those* to be prayed for and *what* is to be prayed for (*Options 1, 2, 4, and 5 are examples of this form*)
2. a first partial form (“That...”), which mentions the *favor* to be requested, referring in only one or two words to the persons prayed for (*Option 3 is an example of this form*)
3. a second partial form (“For...”), which announces only those being prayed for (*Option 6 is an example of this form*)

The full form of the intentions usually works better if reduced to one of the partial forms. Partial forms are less susceptible to wordiness, which works against the clarity and flow of the prayer. Partial forms are also less susceptible to a “hidden agenda.” For example, in “For members of all Christian traditions, that they learn to dialogue more honestly with each other,” “learn to dialogue more honestly” implies that they have not done too well so far. The purpose of the petition is not to point out the negative side of behavior but to emphasize a positive approach.

All intentions within one set of these prayers should use the same form. A consistent pattern encourages a fuller, more confident response from the assembly.