
Prayer of the Faithful / Universal Prayer

Praying for the needs of others is an important part of our Christian responsibilities. Following are seven sets of examples/models of the prayers that are part of 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.

The response of the assembly is a key part of these prayers. It's best if the response to these prayers is something most will know, such as: "Lord, hear our prayer!"

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.

PF1

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

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

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. Let us pray to the Lord...

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. Let us pray to the Lord...

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

PF2

That these faithful Christians, *(Bride's Name)* and *(Groom's Name)*, newly joined in holy matrimony, may always enjoy health and well-being. Let us pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That the Lord will bless their covenant as he chose to sanctify marriage at Cana in Galilee. Let us pray to the Lord...

That they be granted perfect and fruitful love, peace and strength, and that they bear faithful witness to the name of Christian. Let us pray to the Lord...

That the Christian people may grow in virtue day by day and that all who are burdened by any need may receive the help of grace from above. Let us pray to the Lord...

That the grace of the sacrament will be renewed by the Holy Spirit in all married persons here present. Let us pray to the Lord...

PF3

For the Church throughout the world and for the parishes/churches 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)*. Let us pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony: Options for the Prayer of the Faithful / Universal Prayer

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

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

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. Let us pray to the Lord...

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

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

PF4

For the Church, those who serve the Church, and for all people who preach and practice the Gospel of Christ.

Let us 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. Let us pray to the Lord...

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

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

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

PF5

For our Holy Father the Pope, all the bishops and the clergy everywhere, that they may lead us to deeper faith in God and a stronger love for others. Let us pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

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

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. Let us pray to the Lord...

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

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

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

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

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

PF6

For our Church, to keep the promise of salvation. Let us pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For our world, to keep the promise of peace. Let us pray to the Lord...

For our country, to keep the promise of freedom. Let us pray to the Lord...

For our parish, to keep the promise of discipleship. Let us pray to the Lord...

For our hearts, to keep the promise of loving. Let us pray to the Lord...

For our hands, to keep the promise of giving. Let us pray to the Lord...

For our lives, to keep the promise of growing. Let us pray to the Lord...

For this couple, to keep the promise of marriage. Let us pray to the Lord...

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

PF7

For the Church throughout the world; may our faith in the love God has for us be expressed in our love for one another. Let us pray to the Lord...

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For peace in our world; may all lands that suffer violence and injustice find peace and reconciliation. Let us pray to the Lord...

For the poor, the homeless, and for those who are unemployed; may our care and concern for those in need be a sign of God's love. Let us pray to the Lord...

For the protection and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death; may all people be treated with the dignity they deserve as God's children. Let us pray to the Lord...

For all those preparing for the sacrament of Marriage; may they grow in wisdom and grace, and see their vocation to married life as a sign of God's love. Let us pray to the Lord...

For *(Groom's Name)* and *(Bride's Name)*, who begin their married life together this day; may they experience the love of God, the support of family and friends, and the blessings of children. Let us pray to the Lord...

For all those who have died, especially the relatives and friends of *(Bride's Name)* and *(Groom's Name)* and of all present for this wedding; may they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life. Let us pray to the Lord...

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), share the prayers with our church staff for review and suggestions

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 afflicted or 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 intention 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. a partial form (“For...”), which announces only those being prayed for (*PF3 and PF4 are examples of this form.*)
2. another partial form (“That...”), which mentions the *favor* to be requested, referring in only one or two words to the persons prayed for (*PF2 is an example of this form.*)
3. the double form (“For... that (or may)...”), which announces *those* to be prayed for and *what* is to be prayed for (*PF1, PF5, PF6 and PF7 are examples of this form.*)

The double 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.

Ideally, 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.

The Introduction and Conclusion

The introduction and the concluding prayer for the intercessions are, in the end, up to the priest or deacon. If you feel strongly about the wording of the introduction or conclusion, feel free to share your ideas with whomever will be presiding at your wedding liturgy.