

THE INTERCESSIONS

Another name for intercessions is “prayers of petition.” In these prayers, we are asking God for something. The intercessions take the form of a litany.

After a brief invitation from the presider, the litany begins. Intercessions need to be short and simple, placing our needs before an all-loving God.

The use of a *pause* is very important in the intercessions.

- The presider announces the intention.
- The assembly prays silently for it.
- The presider says “We pray as one.”
- Then the prayer is presented to God by the assembly with “Gracious God, hear our prayer.”

Any explanations for the intention tend to interrupt the flow of the litany. These would best be made before the prayer begins. Perhaps your class could take a few minutes as it gathers to discuss the intercessions together. That way everyone will know the background to the intention when it is announced.

Traditionally the intentions focus on the needs of groups such as these:

- our Church
- people who are disadvantaged
- people who are oppressed
- leaders of government and other organizations
- the needs of our local community
- people who are suffering

A litany is a series of short statements with a common response made by the assembly. It is designed to involve the assembly in the prayer.

Announcing the intention is not the same as praying the prayer of intercession.



Consider the following intentions. Which of these groups of people listed on the previous page do they relate to?

For those who are alone because of distance or disability _____

For the safety of all those in our community _____

For Pope Francis and all leaders of the Church _____

For those who are suffering from cancer and for their families _____

For Christians of every race and nationality _____

For the United Nations and those dedicated to world peace _____

For people who have no food or shelter _____

For the President and members of the government _____

For our class members who are home sick today _____

Write some more intentions that your class could use during prayer:

**... We pray as one. Gracious God,
hear our prayer.**

The final petition is often for the unspoken needs that we may have but may not have shared with the rest of the assembly.

