

From the Bishop - Diocesan Synod Implementation

2. WHAT DOES CHRIST OFFER THROUGH THE MASS:

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES (2)

The Mass is the most powerful of all prayers: it is the prayer of the Son of God. The personal and community prayers we bring to him he makes his own. This makes them more powerful.

This means that our prayers for *needs* will always be granted in ways God knows are best for us and whoever else we pray for. He taught that our prayers will never be answered in ways which God knows will harm us, but the *needs* they reflect will be answered in other ways. ¹

He taught too that the effectiveness of our prayers will depend, for example, upon our faith, ² our persistence ³ and whether others join us in praying for our petition. ⁴ Most of all, their effectiveness depends upon whether we live as he taught. ⁵

The Penitential Act

During the Penitential Act, we seek Christ's forgiveness for ways we have failed to live as he taught since the last Mass we participated in. If we do this sincerely, he restores our relationship with himself and the effectiveness of our prayers in the Mass is increased:

- The celebrant calls all to join him in recalling failures to live as Jesus taught
- There is the first Sacred Silence of the Mass, which needs to be of sufficient length for us to name what we seek Christ's forgiveness for
- All pray for forgiveness together
- All praise God for the peace which follows forgiveness of sins by proclaiming the 'Glory to God' (except during Advent and Lent) at a sufficient pace for all to focus on the words.

It is important to have thought through intentions we are going to pray for before the Mass. We should never be praying just for personal needs.

The Collect Prayer

In the Mass, the Risen Jesus makes our prayers his own:

- The celebrant invites all to name the intentions they are praying for: 'Let us pray'.
- There follows a second Sacred Silence of sufficient length for all present to name the intentions they are praying for
- All intentions are then 'collected up' in the Collect Prayer which the Celebrant prays on behalf of all.

Reflection: What intentions am I praying for in today's Mass?

Next week: The Liturgy of the Word

¹ Matthew

² Mark 6:6

³ Luke 18:8

⁴ Matthew 18:14

⁵ eg John 15:7