

The Prayer of the Faithful

The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Prayer of the Faithful, in which we ask God that what has been proclaimed in the readings, explained in the homily, and in which we have professed our faith, may be actualized in us and in our world. Apart from the profession of faith the pattern we use today is ancient. Justin Martyr recorded it in his *Apologia* in the mid-3rd century: „*When the reading is finished, the president addresses us, admonishing us and exhorting us to imitate the splendid things we have heard. Then we all stand and pray...*’ We also stand and pray this ancient prayer form in which we exercise in a special way our baptismal priesthood. This common priesthood of all the baptized calls us to intercede for others just as Christ the High Priest intercedes for us.

The introduction to the Prayer of the Faithful is given by the priest from the Chair and it is addressed to the people announcing why we are going to pray. Each petition is addressed to the people inviting them to pray for a particular intention or cause such as: the local Church, those assembled at Mass, the needs of the world, for leaders and governments, for the universal Church, for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, for the sick, for those who suffer pain and injustice, for our own needs, for the dead. After announcing each intention time should be given for the congregation to pray before the reader gives the „cue-line“, such as „Lord, hear us“, „Let us pray to the Lord“, or „Lord in your mercy“ – and the people give their response.

At the end of the petitions it has been customary in England (traditionally known as the dowry of the Blessed Virgin Mary) to look to Mary, the perfect disciple, and join our prayers with hers in the recitation of a traditional Marian prayer such as the „Hail Mary.“ What is important is that, once the Marian prayer has been said, we should not add another petition, as some do when they say, „let us pray for a moment in silence for our own needs.“ A petition should have already been formulated that covers the need of those gathered. Once the Marian prayer has been recited the priest should conclude the Prayer of the Faithful. It is this concluding prayer that gives the „Bidding Prayer“ its name. The prayer is addressed to the Father asking that, through the power of the holy and ever abiding Spirit these petitions be granted in the name of Jesus in whose name all Christian prayer is made.

Bishop Roche on the New Translation of the Roman Missal



Bishop Arthur Roche

The countdown to September has begun – this is when parishes in England and Wales will begin to use the new translation of the Roman Missal to celebrate Mass.

Bishop Arthur Roche, Bishop of Leeds, has been at the heart of the preparations as Chairman of the International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL), and Chairman of the Bishops' Conference Department for Christian Life and Worship.

Bishop Roche talks about his hopes for the new translation:

“When these new prayers are assimilated I believe that the great gift that they will give to our people is that they will help them to pray scripturally, because the nuances are there very clearly in those new prayers.”

“I think that it certainly has a nobility of language and English is such a very fine language as we know...We’ve been able to recapture something of the deprecatory sense of prayer in these texts which of itself demands greater poetry, greater preciseness but also a certain humility which English itself, by its own language, is able to deliver in such a very lovely straightforward way.”

“It has been one of the most significant developments since the publication of the English version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.”

When asked what he would wish for the Catholic community worshipping using the new translation, he said,

“I would hope that they will realize that whenever they attend Mass there’s more than the physical congregation visibly around them there, that they’re entering into a reality which is taking place in Heaven as well as here on earth.”

In England and Wales, the main parts of the Mass will be said in all parishes using the new translation from September 2011, and from Advent 2011 all of the Mass will be said using the new translation.

To listen to the podcast click on:

<http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/Catholic-Church/Media-Centre/Press-Releases/Press-Releases-2011/Bishop-Roche-on-the-New-Translation-of-the-Roman-Missal>

