



# UNIVERSAL PRAYER



LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Last week we reflected a bit on the Creed, our Profession of Faith, that we say at Mass each week. Today, we move onto the general intercessions, Prayer of the Faithful (as it was once called), presently referred to as the Universal Prayer.

This prayer was instituted by the second Vatican Council as a way for the people to take part in the intercessions for the Church, civil authorities, for those oppressed, for all of us, and for the salvation of the entire world.

It really makes sense to have this prayer for all Christians to enter into by virtue of our vocation. At Mass, the world is not left behind. We pray for the Church and her leaders. We pray for the nation, that it may care for the common good. We pray for those who are suffering in the world through natural disasters, because of illness, loneliness and other sorrows. We pray for women and men of good will. We pray for everyone who might enter into the life of the Church.

The prayer is written with the community's needs in mind in a structured way. This enables us to recall the needs of the world before we pray at the altar. The Universal Prayer reveals to us our vocation as lay Catholics in the world. We are to bring everything to the altar of God. Our priesthood, which is baptismal and not ministerial, is a real intercession before God for the sake of the world. We are not creating intercessions that enable us to express our political position at Mass. Instead, we are really inviting God to transform everything in love.

Perhaps in preparation for next week's Mass, spend a few moments and write your own universal prayer. What did you pray for and why?

Have a blessed, prayerful, and safe week ahead!