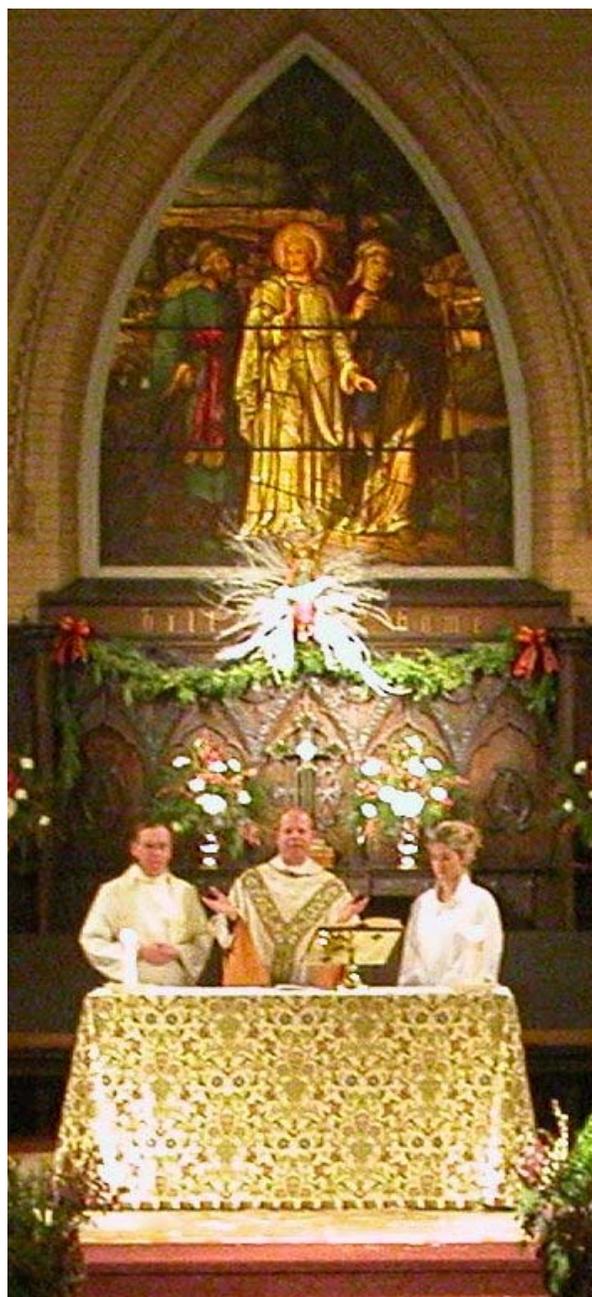


The Work of the People

Worship Leadership Guidebook



Prayers of the People 2007

Introduction

Season by season, Sunday by Sunday, worship service by worship service, the many people who give of their time and talent to ensure that all is ready, who welcome, read, pray, serve, offer bread and wine are part of our treasure as a parish. *You* are part of that treasure.

In this guidebook you will find some reminders of things you already know but have perhaps forgotten; details of things that may be new to you; and hopefully shared wisdom that will help you in your role in worship leadership.

When you welcome in the visitor and the parishioner alike, we meet Christ in one another. When you read scripture and help the listener hear the story, perhaps for the first time, you help draw them in. When you offer intercessions you put into words or give space for words that which we need to offer up to God. When you assist the clergy as a server you help to put the liturgy in motion. When you offer the bread and the wine you feed the gathered community. When you work behind the scenes to set the holy hardware and the gifts of wine and bread in place you ensure that we are ready – ready to welcome, the listen, to pray and to be fed.

Thank you for all that you do to support the worship life of the parish.

<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>The Prayers of the People</i>	6
Preparing the prayers	6
The Prayers	6
Leading the Prayers.....	7
<i>Glossary of Terms</i>	9
<i>Bibliography</i>	13

The Prayers of the People

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity

1 Timothy 2.1-2

Preparing the prayers

As Intercessor for the prayers of the people not only must you prepare the prayers for the community to enter into but you must be prepared to pray. In deciding whether to use/adapt the litanies in the BAS or another resource or offer prayers written for that particular Sunday your preparation could include:

- **Praying the lessons** – read through the lectionary readings not so that you can preach a sermon but so that the tone, the mood, the language of the readings is ‘in you’
- Considering the **other prayers** that will be used in the liturgy and other prayer resources
- Recalling the **liturgical season**
- Singing through some **hymns** – learning to ‘breathe’ the language.

The Prayers

If you have never written prayers of the people start slowly – use resources like the BAS or Gail Ramshaw’s Intercessions. *You don’t ever have to write your own prayers – it is perfectly acceptable to adapt these other resources to our context.* If you decide to write your own prayers use these resources as models. Petitions need not be long!

There is a **general structure to the prayers** and it is important to keep that consistent both for the people and for the Presider to know when you have offered the final petition.

That structure is:

- The church
- The world
- The nation and all in authority
- The local community
- Those in need (including the sick, other need, the dying)
- The dead
- Thanksgiving

Prayers

Pitfalls:

It would be helpful to keep the following in mind as you prepare the intercessions:

- *Consistency – Confusion about who is being addressed* – God, us, Christ? Either address the gathered body (I bid your prayers for...) or address God - not both. Use the verse and response printed in the bulletin – the ones used here are simple and easy to remember.
- *The prayers become a sermon* – You are praying *with* not *at* the gathered faithful – please don't preach to us. If you keep the petitions brief there is less chance of this happening.
- *The prayers flow with the rest of the service* – it is helpful to keep an ear tuned during the service for language that could be included in the prayers. Does the psalm refrain dovetail with what you've written? Is there something in the sermon that you can easily weave into the 'gathering in' at the beginning of the prayers?
- *Language* – avoid:
 - clichés;
 - repetition that grates (Jesus wejus);
 - complex phrases that leave people confused about what it is that they are praying for;
 - churchy jargon that makes no sense to the uninitiated
- *Silence* – not enough/too much. This is a tough one to get right – handle it with care. Develop a 'technique' for measuring the silence – breathe deeply three times (beware: you are wearing a microphone!) count steamboats or 'lord have mercy's. God might have something to say to us, too, so ensure that the silence allows for that. Some folks will offer their petitions aloud – the 'popcorn' rule is a good one to follow. As when making popcorn, prayers offered aloud are sometimes a little slow to start, then begin to 'pop' with greater frequency and then begin to slow down. Bring the silence to an end when the petition has reached the point of being 'done'. You'll know the moment – trust yourself!

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. – Romans 8.26-27

Leading the Prayers

- **Arrive early**, get your microphone, make sure it works, sit near the lectern - this is basic stuff but just the time that you don't take time with this you end up with a microphone that doesn't work or some other wrinkle.
- **Make sure that you are ready to pray** – take a moment before you start to ensure that you are focused and ready to go – and then *let go*.

- **Speak clearly, carefully, audibly but not intrusively** – you are there to lead the community in prayer. Offer petitions in a way that leads the gathering into the intercession but allows them the freedom to name what needs to be named, if only in sighs too deep for words.
- **Be consistent in your delivery** so that there is a sense of knowing what comes next. For example, if you use a concluding prayer before the verse and response do it every time.

When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him – Matthew 6.7-8 (Jesus teaches how to pray)

Glossary of Terms

Alb – the white robe worn by altar servers. (From the Latin word *alba*, “white [garment]”.)

Boat person – a server (typically younger) who accompanies the thurifer (see below) and carries the “boat” – a vessel containing grains of incense – during high feasts such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints.

Burse – a case made of two squares, covered with the same material of the same colour and design as the veil (see below). It sits on top of the veiled chalice, and contains the corporal (see below) or, more often here at CoR, an extra purificator (see below). The word is derived from the same Latin word that gives us the term “purse”.

Breadbox – small silver box for communion wafers; typically found on the credence table

Chalice – a cup used to hold the wine during the celebration of the Eucharist, and by means of which the consecrated wine is distributed.

Chancel – the part of the church where the altar stands.

Ciborium – a tall, silver, cup-like container (usually with a lid) which holds communion wafers during the Eucharistic Prayer (or consecration); brought up by the gift-bearers at the beginning of the Offertory.

Credence table – the small table (a side-table, really) on which the communion vessels are placed while not in use at the altar. At CoR, it stands to the left of the sacristy door.

Crucifer – literally, “cross-bearer”. The altar server who carries the cross (and serves table at the 9:30 a.m. service)

Cruet – a glass or silver vessel which contains either wine or water. At CoR, wine is normally in one of two glass cruets, both of which are brought up by the gift-bearers at the Offertory: (1) a large one, which remains on the altar for the Eucharistic Prayer, and (2) a smaller one, whose contents are emptied into the principal chalice, and which then is taken to the credence table.

Epistle acolyte – carries a taper behind and to the right of the processional cross, and serves the table at the 11:15 a.m. service.

Gospel acolyte – carries a taper behind and to the left of the cross.

Liturgical colours – the colours proper to the seasons of the Church Year. They are traditional in the sense of being customary, not in the sense of belonging to the non-negotiable foundations of Christian faith and worship. The colours are as follows:

- Green – for use in “Ordinary Time,” the numbered Propers after Christmas/Epiphanytide and before Lent, and after Pentecost until Advent. Green is the colour of the growing seasons, spring and summer. Why do we also don it in January and February? Probably because it is the default-mode colour for more than half the Church Year; what other colour can we wear when we are no longer doing Christmas and Epiphany, and have not yet entered our penitence-mode? Here at CoR, the altar and the clergy continue to be vested in green through Ordinary Time, but we no longer have a green burse and veil (see above and below); the last remaining green set became too threadbare for use around 1995, and the decision was made not to replace it.
- White (or gold) – for use from the Easter Vigil/Easter Day until the Day of Pentecost; and on all feasts of our Lord – e.g. Epiphany (January 6th) and the Baptism of the Lord (Sunday following Epiphany), the Presentation (February 2nd), the Annunciation (March 25th), the Transfiguration (August 6th), St Mary the Virgin (August 15th), All Saints’ Day (November 1st), the Reign of Christ (Proper 34/The Last Sunday after Pentecost), &c. Also to be used for weddings and funerals. White is the colour associated with the purifying mission of Jesus Christ (the incarnation and the resurrection) – humanity’s sins have been bleached out by his person and work, there is no alloy of any other colour to compromise us any more. (Gold also has the same symbolism – pure gold is metal utterly refined and purged in the crucible, without any contaminating allot.)
- Red – for use on all days of Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Good Friday), the Day of Pentecost, and Holy Cross Day (September 14th). Also to be used on the feast-days of martyrs. Red is the colour of blood that has been shed; it is also the colour of flame (as at Pentecost’s “tongues as of fire”).

- Blue – for use through the season of Advent only. In the usage of the mediaeval English church, blue was the colour associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary – hence the hue known as “Marian blue”.
- Purple – for use throughout the season of Lent (Ash Wednesday until Palm Sunday). Why purple should have been specially associated with penitence is one of the more puzzling puzzles of the Christian tradition.

Nave – the main body of the church, where the pews are. The term seems to have been derived from *naos*, the Greek word for “temple” – not (as has sometimes been supposed) from *navis*, the Latin word for “ship”.

Narthex – the open space at the back of the church, behind the nave and inside the inner doorway, where we gather after the liturgy for refreshments and conversations.

Pall – a square of cardboard, stiff plastic, or (occasionally) glass, covered with white linen, which sits atop the chalice. It is designed to protect the wine from flies and other insects that may take a dive into the cup and drown happy in the beverage. (If such an accident happens during the Eucharistic Prayer the PC – or if during the communion, the minister administering the chalice in question – is expected to remove the insect and dispose of it as discreetly and unfussily as possible. The normal procedure is to consume the now sacrament-soaked bug. It is considered extremely bad form for the unfortunate minister to leave the dead thing in the sacrament, or to make anybody else consume the offending bug.)

N.B. The word *pall* may also describe the large cloth covering (formerly black or purple, now usually white or gold) draped over a coffin at funerals.

Paten – a plate that holds the principal loaf or the priest’s host (see below) to be used during the Eucharistic Prayer. Most patens at CoR are small silver plates which sit atop the chalices, until unpacked and readied for distribution of communion. (The “principal paten,” however, is the gold-plated one, which goes with the “principal chalice,” whose inner bowl is also gold-plated.) At the 9:30 liturgy, there is a very large silver paten on which rests the loaf of bread; this, with the loaf on it, is brought forward by the gift-bearers at the Offertory.

Priest’s host – the large wafer on the principal paten, for use at the 11:15 liturgy. The term is derived from the Latin word *hostis*, meaning, “sacrifice” or “oblation”. Formerly, only the PC and, by courtesy, any other clergy who happened to be present (bishops and priests, but not

deacons) could receive the host in communion. We at CoR treat this custom as a matter left to the discretion of the PC.

Purificator – white linen cloth (actually a linen handkerchief, normally with a cross embroidered into the upper right-hand corner) used to wipe the chalice clean after each use when giving communion.

Thurifer – a server who carries and swings the *thurible* (a.k.a. *censer*) during high feasts such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints. The terms *thurible* and *thurifer* come from the Latin word *thus*, *thuris*, “incense”. So a thurible is an incense-container, and the thurifer is the incense-bearer.

Veil – a large square of silk cloth, which covers the principal chalice and paten until they are placed on the altar at the Preparation of the Gifts. The veil is in one of the liturgical colours of the Church Year (see above) and often has symbols embroidered in gold thread. (These appliqués are called orphries, and indicate the front of “the communion pack”. This means that, when a server places a veiled communion-pack on the altar, the orphrey should always face the congregation – not the deacon.) As noted above, CoR has no veil (or burse) in green.

Bibliography

The Book of Alternative Services. Anglican Church of Canada. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1985.

Huffman, Walter C. *Prayer of the Faithful: Understanding and Creatively Leading Corporate Intercessory Prayer*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1986, 1992. (A thoughtful exploration of intercessory prayer that discusses both the prayers themselves and the role of the one leading the prayers.)

Johnson, David Enderton. *The Prayers of the People: Ways to Make Them Your Own*. Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1988. (A helpful guide to the litanies in *The Book of Common Prayer* – Episcopal Church USA and *The Book of Alternative Services* – Anglican Church of Canada including suggestions of how to adapt the litanies and when they might most effectively be used.)

Klein, Patricia S. *Worship Without Words*. Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2000. (An excellent glossary of terms commonly in use in the church)

Plater, Ormonde. *Intercession: A Theological and Practical Guide*. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1995 (Includes both the history of Intercessory Prayer and some guidelines for preparing the prayers.)

Ramshaw, Gail. *Intercessions for the Christian People*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990. (Litanies prepared for each Sunday in the liturgical year)

Rowthorn, Jeffrey W. *The Wideness of God's Mercy*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1985, 1995. (A variety of litanies)

Stookey, Laurence Hull. *Let the Whole Church Say Amen!: A Guide for Those Who Pray in Public*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001 (A handbook that offers exercises to improve prayer writing ability.)

The Church of the Redeemer
162 Bloor Street W
Toronto, ON M5S 1M4
416.922.4948
redeemer@bellnet.ca
www.TheRedeemer.ca