

The Eucharistic Prayer's Prayers - Intercessions and Commemoration

The final action of the Liturgy of the Word comes in the General Intercessions, also known as the Prayers of the Faithful. But the General Intercessions in the Liturgy of the Word are not the final or only intercessions we pray at Mass. There are also particular intercessions prayed within the Eucharistic Prayer. The General Intercessions were included in the Order of Mass for the first time only after the Second Vatican Council, but intercessions for various particular classes of people have been part of the EP from early in its history. They follow the *epiclesis* and *communion epiclesis*, also a form of petitionary prayer, in which we pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon the gifts of bread and wine and those assembled to change them into the living Body and Blood, the living sacrifice of Christ: *May he make us an everlasting gift to you and enable us to share in the inheritance of your saints*. A commemoration of saints follows. The exact form and content of the prayers vary somewhat from EP to EP, but there is always a prayer for *the Church and her pastors, the immediate community, the dead*, with specific mention of *Mary* and other of the *saints and martyrs*. In EPIII there is also a prayer for all God's children *wherever they may be*. This all inclusive prayer once again expresses the universal salvific meaning of the Cross of Jesus and its sacramental re-presentation in our prayer of the Mass. Our commemoration of those who have gone before us in faith serves to remind us of both the example and guidance of their faith, and to renew in us the hope of full fellowship with them in the Kingdom of God.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at tkautza@saintmaryhc.org.