

Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

Suggestions for Leading Worship



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RE: Liturgical Suggestions for the Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time – Cycle B

Sunday or Feast Day date: February 21-22, 2009

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

An Overview...

For the past weeks, there have been numerous central healing stories in the readings from the liturgy. This week's Gospel presents a clearer lens through which Jesus is healing, through His power to forgive sin. A paralytic man is brought to Jesus and restored to health through Jesus' forgiving the man's sin. Isaiah gives a preview of this event in the First Reading, as does the Responsorial Psalm. Jesus is going against Jewish tradition in claiming to forgive sin. Jesus says that the ritual practices of the old Law are not the primary doorway to forgiveness. Rather, integrity of intentions, contrite hearts, purified motives and an awareness of dependence on God are what is crucial.

These can be welcome insights with Lent on the horizon.

Faith Sharing Questions...

1. What are the hardest difficulties that you have with forgiveness?
2. What message does our culture give about forgiving and being forgiven?
3. How do you best share the value of forgiveness in your life?

Some Other Considerations as You Prepare...

1. You may consider using the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling since this is the last weekend before Lent begins; during Lent use of holy water as a sacramental is best minimized. Focus on the strength of Christ in our weakness in the prayer of blessing over the water.
2. Or, you may choose to use a penitential rite. The eighth set of Form C is recommended, as it emphasizes Jesus' forgiving sin, healing the sick, and strengthening the community.
3. The Alternative Opening Prayer is recommended.
4. Either Preface I or Preface VI for Ordinary Time is recommended.
5. Use Solemn Blessing for Ordinary Time V.

Looking Ahead...

1. The Third Sunday of Lent is the first Lenten Sunday on which a Scrutiny is celebrated. The Scripture readings for the Masses in which unbaptized Elect celebrate a Scrutiny ritual are best taken from *Lectionary* readings for Cycle A, so make sure your readers and preachers are prepared for this.
2. The Diocesan Chrism Mass has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, at 10:30 am.
3. Holy Week begins on Passion [Palm] Sunday weekend, April 4-5.
4. There is a special Retreat for Pastoral Musicians to be offered at St. Joseph Abbey in March. For more information contact the Office of Worship.

SAMPLE INTERCESSORY PRAYERS FOR THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Priest: We gather our prayers before the Father who is merciful and just:

Deacon (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. For the mission of the Church in the world; for faithfulness in proclaiming the Gospel for the reconciliation of all people, we pray to the Lord...
2. For peace among all nations and an end to conflict and violence caused by greed and hatred, we pray to the Lord...
3. For those in our country who are suffering in difficult economic times; for those worried and anxious about their bills and their future, we pray to the Lord...
4. For those who live in pain; for those who care for the sick; for those who serve the poor; may comfort and healing prevail, we pray to the Lord...
5. For those who have died in peace, and for the dead whose faith is known alone to God, we pray to the Lord...
6. In peace and in silence we offer to God our needs...

[pause; the presider alone concludes]

Priest: Listen to our prayers,
made this day with confidence, O God,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.