

# USCCB provides resources, prayers for Pope Benedict, his successor

**By Catholic News Service**

WASHINGTON - To help dioceses, parishes and other groups pray for Pope Benedict XVI and for the selection of a new pope, the Secretariat of Divine Worship of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided liturgical and musical resources as well as specific prayers.

The resources and prayers can be found [here](#).

According to these guidelines, diocesan bishops and parish priests could offer a special Mass for the pope using prayers from the Roman Missal specifically for this purpose. The Mass is permitted on weekdays during Lent.

The material suggests that homilies reflect on a particular ministry of Pope Benedict XVI as an example to follow, especially as it relates to Lent. It mentions highlighting a major theme in Pope Benedict's teachings and writings such as: "the need for an authentic personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

Other themes include the pope's love for the liturgy, efforts to achieve peace in the world, his ecumenical outreach and his constant care, concern and outreach for the poor, the sick and oppressed.

Suggested petitions for the pope include prayers that he be given the strength needed to complete his remaining ministry, prayers for peace and consolation, and prayers that his efforts in fostering unity may bear fruit.

Once the pope's resignation takes effect Feb. 28, a special Mass for the election of his successor can be celebrated, according to the guidelines of the liturgical calendar, during weekdays in Lent.

Suggested homilies include reflecting on the pope's role and ministry and stressing the role of the universal church.

The guidelines note that Catholics should take this time to offer prayers, works and almsgiving for the successful election of a new pope. It also suggests that petitions during the Prayer of the Faithful should pray for the Holy Spirit to "inspire and strengthen the cardinal-electors" and that the cardinals be open to God's grace in the election process.

When the new pope is elected, again bishops and priests could offer a special Mass for the newly elected pope according to the guidelines of the liturgical calendar, only on weekdays in Lent, but not during the days of Holy Week.

Catholics are urged to pray for the newly elected pope and churches are encouraged to affix gold and white bunting above entrances or flowers near the Vatican flag.

Suggested petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful include prayers for the new pope to be strengthened in his ministry, to work with the world's bishops to build up the church and to be "a champion of the poor, a reconciler of nations and a force for peace and unity in our world."

The guidelines also suggest specific songs that can be used in such liturgies.

*Also see:*

Archbishop Lori's Prayer for the Church

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