

Fr. Perozich comments —

In my priesthood I have met several women who cry easily, frequently, and for many reasons. They told me that they have the gift of tears.

I neither understood what they believed about crying easily nor their belief that this is some sort of divine gift to them to be moved emotionally so frequently for any reason.

- *Fr. John Zuhlsdorf explains that the **real** gift of tears is “**compunction** of the heart for sins committed.”*

Compunction is defined as:

A strong uneasiness caused by a sense of guilt:

A sting of conscience or a pang of doubt aroused by wrongdoing or the prospect of wrongdoing.

A pricking; stimulation.

- *“It seems like a universal call to sorrow for sins, one’s own and for those of others, for sins of commission, for sins of omission, even for sheer tepidity.”*

Praying for compunction for those who one feels has offended against another would help me in the process of forgiveness, knowing that God can respond by moving hearts to acknowledge and cease wrongdoing.

It would help to stem criticism of others and their behaviors, knowing that they can be brought to God for healing by feeling stung at their misdeeds and being moved to repentance.

My quick prayer for others is:

***Lord, frustrate their evil designs,
and convert their hearts as you
convert mine.***

QUAERITUR:

Can a Mass for the gift of tears be said for someone else or is it only for the celebrant or person requesting the Mass?

The prayers seem like a powerful source of conversion for self. Can we ask it for others?

That's a really good question! I'm glad you asked.

First of all, we need some basics. In the older, traditional Missale Romanum there is a orations "*ad petendam compunctionem cordis...* in order to petition compunction of heart" usually rendered as "for the gift of tears".

The prayers, which could be added to the orations in the *Vetus Ordo* (which is so much more flexible and reflective of knowledge of the human condition than the *Novus*), are beautiful. Also, there is nothing in them that suggests that the priest is asking for this gift only for *himself*, though he clearly does ask for himself. He raises the petition for "us".

Yes, I think that a priest, or a petitioner with a Mass intention, could apply these prayers in a special and pointed way for the gift of tears to be given to a certain person. Of course, we Catholics are "both/and" and not "either/or" when it comes to this sort of things. We don't have to exclude ourselves when asking for graces for others.

Here are the prayers. What do you think? It seems like a universal call to sorrow for sins, one's own and for those of others, for sins of commission, for sins of omission, even for sheer tepidity.

Read 'em... and weep.

COLLECT

Omnipotens et mitissime Deus, qui sitienti populo fontem viventis aquae de petra produxisti: educ de

cordis nostri duritia lacrimas compunctionis; ut peccata nostra plangere valeamus, remissionemque eorum, te miserante, mereamur accipere. Per Dominum.

O Almighty and most gentle God, who draw forth living water out of a rock for Thy thirsting people: draw now forth tears of compunction from the hardness of our hearts; so that we may be able to weep for our sins, and that we might merit, as Thou art merciful, their forgiveness.

Note the reference to God bringing forth water from the rock for the people in the wilderness. See Exodus 17 and 1 Cor 10.

SECRET

Hanc oblationem, quaesumus, Domine Deus, quam tuae maiestati pro peccatis nostris offerimus, propitius respice: et produc de oculis nostris lacrimarum flumina, quibus debita flammaram incendia valeamus extinguere. Per Dominum.

Look graciously upon this sacrificial offering, O Lord God, which for our sins we present to Thy Majesty ; and bring forth from our eyes torrent of tears, by which we might be able to extinguish the fire of flames we have deserved.

POSTCOMMUNIO

Gratiam Spiritus Sancti, Domine Deus, cordibus nostris clementer infunde: quae nos gemitibus lacrimarum

efficiat maculas nostrorum diluere peccatorum; atque optatae nobis, te largiente, indulgentiae praestet effectum. Per Dominum.

Mercifully pour forth, O Lord God, the grace of the Holy Ghost into our hearts; that it bring us to wash away of the stains of our sins by the sighing of tears; and, Thou bestowing, grant to us the effect of pardon we desire.

I believe that this is an important petition right now... for the Church as a whole.

Right now... people should get down on their knees – if not prostrate on the floor – and beg God with honest tears to forgive and to move to conversion so many of our Church's pastors. What a supreme mess we have. The loss of souls is staggering. Ponder this seriously and even the hardest boiled of eggs among us will soften. Those prelates, in Holy Orders that will endure even in Hell, will have to answer. But conversion is possible while there is life. Tears of the faithful, interceding in confident sorrow – sorrowful confidence? – can be a start. — *Fr. John Zuhlsdorf*