

ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE

(Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution)

Advent has a twofold character: as a season to prepare for Christmas when Christ's first coming to us is remembered and as a season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's second coming at the end of time. Advent is thus a period for devout and joyful expectation. While not strictly a penitential season, the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance as a means to deepen conversion to receive both comings of Christ is advantageous to the Faithful. "Indeed the sacrament of Reconciliation with God brings about a true "spiritual resurrection," restoration of the dignity and blessings of the life of the children of God, of which the most precious is friendship with God." CCC 1468

OPENING HYMN

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Presider: My brothers and sisters, Advent is a time of preparation, when we make ready to celebrate the mystery of our Lord's coming as one like us, the beginning of our redemption. Advent also moves us to look forward with renewed hope to the second coming of Christ, when God's plan of salvation will be brought to fulfillment. We are reminded too of our Lord's coming to each one of us at the hour of our death. We must make sure that he will find us prepared for his coming, as the gospel tells us: "Blessed are those servants who are found when the Lord comes." This service of penance and conversion is meant to make us ready in mind and in heart for the coming of Christ, which we are soon to celebrate in the Solemnity of Christmas.

Let us pray:

Eternal Son of God,
creator of the human family
and our redeemer,
come at last among us
as the child of the Immaculate Virgin,
and redeem the world.
Reveal Your loving presence
by which you set us free from sin
in becoming one like us
in all things but sin,
for you live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

If there are several readings, a psalm or other appropriate song or even a period of silence should intervene between them, so that everyone may understand the Word of God more deeply and give it heartfelt assent. If there is only one reading, it is preferable that it be from the Gospel. (Rite of Penance, 51)

First Reading: Isaiah 54: 1-10
The Lord calls you back.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103: 1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11
“The Lord is kind and merciful”

Second Reading: Romans 6:2-11
*Consequently, you too must think of yourselves
As being dead to sin and living for God.*

Gospel Acclamation verse: 1 John 2:5
*Whoever keeps the word of Christ
The love of God is perfected in him.*

Gospel: John 15:9-14
*If you keep my commandments,
You will remain in my love.*

Homily

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

Examination of Conscience

The form of the Examination of Conscience suggested in Appendix III of the Rite of Penance (available on the Worship Resources webpage) may be adapted to meet the needs of the faithful gathered. A period of silence should always be included so that each person may personally examine his or her conscience.

Act of Repentance

Presider: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us that we may see his glory full of grace and truth. For those times and occasions we have failed to acknowledge Christ in creation and in one another, let us repent of our actions and seek reconciliation and peace, as we pray:

All: I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The Lord's Prayer

Presider: Confident in God's never-failing mercy and in the joyful knowledge of God who comes to our aid in all times and places, let us pray in the words that Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, gave us: Our Father . . .

All: who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Presider: Lord our God,
on the first day of creation
you made the light that scatters all darkness.
Let Christ, the light of lights,
hidden from all eternity,
shine at last on your people
and free us from the darkness of sin.
Fill our lives with good works
as we go out to meet your Son,
so that we may give him a fitting welcome.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Introduction to the Places of Confession and Invitation to the Sacrament

Presider: Because we are many, we invite those seeking the sacrament to be mindful of the many seeking the graces of the sacrament in a limited amount of time. Those seeking spiritual direction or personal counseling are asked to consider another time for this ministry. The priests will be in the body of the church and welcome you for individual confession. Those sitting in the church are asked to pray for those celebrating the sacrament and to remain in the church until the end of the liturgy to express our solidarity as a community. At this time, I invite the priests, who have generously joined us to celebrate this sacrament, to take their places in the church.

Individual Confession and Absolution

The assembly remains seated and penitents move to a confessor when one becomes available. As penitents approach, they are greeted by the priest-confessor and with the Sign of the Cross; they then confess their sins. After receiving absolution, penitents return to their places in the assembly to pray.

Proclamation of God's Mercy (*stand*)

Canticle of Mary

Luke 1:46-55

My soul + proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit
rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From
this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty
has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has
lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he
has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has
remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made
to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever. Glory to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

CONCLUDING RITES

Presider: All-holy Father,
you have shown us your mercy
and have made us a new creation in the likeness of your Son.
Make us living signs of your love for all the world to see.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Presider: May almighty God bless you, Father, Son, and ✠ Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Presider: The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace to prepare a way for the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**