

SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE

ADVENT Cycle C

*“May your love increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception”
(Phil 1:9-11)*

Rite for reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution

Presider's Guide & Script

(Environment: if an Advent Wreath is in the space, the appropriate number of candles should be lit; meditative Advent music may be played until Presider and ministers gather.)

(Worship Aid: suggested to include text of songs or song numbers –also for an explanation of the way the service will be conducted i.e. that priests will be stationed at various points around the church; after the priest gives each one absolution please return to the body of the assembly until all have finished for the final blessing and dismissal; music may continue softly and reverently during the individual confessions).

INTRODUCTORY RITES

As priests (vested in alb & purple stole) who will assist with individual confessions arrive, they are informed of their stations for individual confession & absolution and then asked to be seated in one or two of the front pews. Candles in front of the ambo can be lit in preparation for the Liturgy of the Word. Presider enters (no formal procession) and Opening Song begins.

SONG

Suggestion: *O Come, O come, Emmanuel*, or another appropriate song that is in the parish repertoire.

GREETING

Presider: Grace, mercy, and peace be with you from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Savior.
R. And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Presider welcomes everyone in these or similar words.

Presider: Dear sisters and brothers in Christ: We gather together one more year at Christmas' door. Our God will never stop coming to us to lead us to the perfection of His Son and prepare us for the final encounter with him. God keeps calling us to communion with him. Ever since each one's creation, and the first personal encounter in Baptism, he leads us into a progressive maturing in our stages of life. This mutual relationship between God and us is translated in our overcoming our sinful habits within and outside of ourselves. We have to be firm believers in the hope, love and justice, in all of God's ways

which will perfect us as followers of Jesus Christ. This season of Advent offers us to become ever closer to the sanctifying grace of Christ while overcoming what impedes us to be people of hope for our world. We are equipped to be better witnesses with a growth in knowledge and sensitivity towards the world around us.

OPENING PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray to the Father of Jesus, the Father of hope for the world, who through the Spirit makes us grow in love for him and for our brothers and sisters. Eternal and merciful Father, we come before you fully aware of our need for reconciliation and to welcome your mercy and grace. Open our eyes of faith to convert to your ways of love and justice. Give us a new heart so we can be genuine followers of your Son, and our lives can then impact the world with hope. May our society contemplate the glory of Christ revealed in your church, and so believe that Jesus Christ is the Just One, sent by you, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

R. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading **Philippians 1:4-6,8-11** *Show yourselves pure and blameless for the day of Christ*

(Lectionary: second reading of second Sunday of Advent, cycle C)

Responsorial **Psalm Psalm 25** *To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.* (Lectionary: responsorial psalm of first Sunday of Advent, cycle C)

Gospel Acclamation *“Behold, the Lord comes to save his people; blessed are those prepared to meet him”*

Gospel **Luke 3:10-18** *What should we do?* (Lectionary: gospel of third Sunday of Advent, cycle C)

HOMILY

Homily Suggestions:

Both readings are a hymn to a God who will always incite his people to be new persons within a corrupt world. In Christ we have discovered the gospel, the announcement of the coming Kingdom of God, we are made to become the first fruits of a new humanity, and it is expected from us to act clearly and cleanly, to offer a courageous example and a convincing witnessing that it is possible the love of God and the love of neighbor. Only through the efficient love to our brothers and sisters during the deep crisis we are experiencing, will our world be witness of a hope that goes beyond “live for one self”.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

(A period of time may be spent in making an examination of conscience and arousing true sorrow for sins. The priest, deacon, or another minister may help the faithful by brief statements or a kind of litany, taking into consideration their circumstances, age, etc.)

God's Word is inviting us to ask ourselves:

“The one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus”

- Do I believe in God's word and in its power to change my heart?
- Do I take seriously my relationship with God and live thankfully for the gift of faith?
- Do I cherish my participation at the Eucharist every Sunday?

“I love you with the affection of Christ Jesus. May your love increase in knowledge and every kind of perception”.

- Am I violent toward others? Am I short of patience and respect toward others?
- Have I been sexually abusive?
- Am I willing to forgive and ask for forgiveness? Am I grateful to others?

“Your love may increase to discern what is of value to be pure and blameless for the day of Christ”

- Have I taken advantage of others' weaknesses or am I sensitive to others' pain and suffering?
- Have I scandalized others through my bad example?
- Have I respected the property of others?

“Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none”

- Do I willingly minister to others?
- Are my God-given talents at the service of the common good?
- Have I tried to truly live out my vocation in life?

“Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone”

- Have I sought the truth, defended it, and communicated it to others?
- Do I work to overcome injustice or do I choose not to implicate myself against it?
- Do I speak out against lies and injustices? Do I embrace prejudice or work rather against it?

”He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire”

- Do I live my spiritual life in a demanding way?
- Am I a sign of hope and joy for others?
- Do I value the goodness of others? Do I believe in and value my own goodness?

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

(The deacon or another minister invites all to kneel, and to join in saying a general formula for confession.)

Presider: My brothers and sisters confess your sins and pray for each other, that you may be healed in your minds and hearts.

All recite: 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, (strike breast) 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.

LITANY

Presider: Christ our Savior is God's gift to our humanity. Let us pray to the Father to be freed from our sins and to walk along the ways of God's kingdom: Your forgiveness is our hope. May our faith be well witnessed and our love be convincing.

R. Send us the Just One.

That your Son's coming make of us a truly reconciled community with you and with one another as a sign to a divided world.

R. Send us the Just One.

That our faith in Jesus Christ help us overcome our selfish attitudes and use our gifts for the common good.

R. Send us the Just One.

That we may grow in knowledge and perception to proclaim the truth and justice of your kingdom.

R. Send us the Just One.

That our compassion towards our suffering brothers and sisters be a sign of hope to our unforgiving world.

R. Send us the Just One.

That your call to holiness fosters our commitment to share all we are and have.

R. Send us the Just One.

That Christ's constant coming to our lives incites our response against injustice, indifference and passivity.

R. Send us the Just One.

OUR FATHER

Presider: Now let us turn to God our Father and ask him to free us from evil and prepare us for the coming of his kingdom:

All recite: Our Father, 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. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Then the penitents go to the priests designated for individual confessions, and confess their sins. Each one receives and accepts a fitting act of satisfaction and is absolved. After hearing the confession and offering suitable counsel, the priest extends his hands over the penitent's head (or at least extends his right hand) and give him absolution. Everything else which is customary in individual confession is omitted.

PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE FOR GOD'S MERCY

When the individual confessions have been completed, the presider invites all present to offer thanks and encourages them to do good works which will proclaim the grace of repentance in the life of the entire community and each of its members. It is fitting for all to sing a psalm or hymn or to say a litany in acknowledgement of God's power and mercy.

Suggestion:

CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Presider: Almighty and eternal God, you sent your only-begotten Son to reconcile the world to yourself. Lift from our hearts the oppressive gloom of sin, so that we may celebrate the approaching dawn of Christ's birth with fitting joy, and with a renewed commitment to do your will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.