

SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE

LENT Cycle A

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (Mt 6:12)

Rite for reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution.

Presider’s Guide & Script

***Environment:** the Lenten environment of the worship space may be maintained for the reconciliation service, and it is recommended to do so to maintain the connection with the season. If a large cross or crucifix is present in the space, it can be highlighted with lighting - or additional candles could be placed in the sanctuary, near the baptismal font, or in some places in the assembly area. Meditative Lenten music may be played until Presider and ministers gather.*

***Worship Aid:** Lenten music or references to songs in the parish hymnal or music resources should be included in the worship aid, as well as an explanation of the way the service will be conducted, e.g. 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 will continue softly and reverently throughout the service.*

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 may be lit in preparation for the Liturgy of the Word. Presider enters (no formal procession) and Opening Song begins.

SONG *Choose an appropriate song from the parish repertoire.*

GREETING

Presider: The Word of God urges us to love and forgive our imperfect brothers and sisters. We have all been ravaged by our personal and collective sinfulness, and are in desperate need to be open to the life of grace. The grace and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ who loves us and calls us to a life of holiness and justice, be always with you.

R. And also with you.

INTRODUCTION

Presider welcomes everyone in these or similar words.

Presider: We cannot be halfhearted if we are to triumph over sin. God himself has set the standard of how we are to forgive our brothers and sisters who sin against us. Nothing less than reconciliation with our brothers and sisters will do.

OPENING PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray for the grace to forgive others as generously as God has forgiven us. *pause* Lord Jesus, listen to our prayer and bring it to our heavenly Father. In your mercy and love teach us to love and forgive others as you have loved and forgiven us. Have mercy on your people and lead us to the joys of heaven, where you are Lord for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

1st Reading Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18 *Judge your neighbor justly.* (Lectionary: First reading from Monday of first week of Lent)

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 119:1-2,4-5,7-8 *“Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord”* (Lectionary: Resp. Psalm of Saturday of the first week of Lent)

Choose a setting from the parish repertoire.

Gospel Acclamation *“If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts”*

Gospel Matthew 7:7-12 *Everyone who asks, receives.* (Lectionary: Gospel of Thursday of first week of Lent)

HOMILY

Homily Suggestions:

The people of God is asked to mirror in their relationship with one another the reverence and love they hold for God. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” sums up this most respectful attitude which will be the cornerstone of becoming God’s family, that is, brothers and sisters under the same God and Father. Jesus, in the gospel, prefers to instill in us, an even more positive attitude, since it is not enough not to hurt the neighbor, “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you”.

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.)

On Easter we will have an opportunity to renew our baptismal promises. We will publicly renounce our sin and will be open to the Holy Spirit who makes possible our new life in Christ. The same formula will be now our guide for examining our conscience.

Reject to be saved by any other which is not God

Do you reject Satan, the spirit of evil, that is, the father of sinfulness, untruth, violence and selfishness?
(pause)

Do you reject all evil works, like injustice and greed, favoritism and envy, vengeance and lies, indifference and jealousies, materialism and sensuality, all acts against faith, hope and love? (pause)

Do you reject evil in interpersonal relationships: like any type of abuse and hate, discrimination and aggression, contempt and unforgiveness? (pause)

Do you reject to remain idle against sinfulness because of cowardiness, laziness, or personal inconvenience? (pause)

Do you reject ways of thinking and behaving which consider: money as the supreme aspiration in life; pleasure above everything; business as an absolute value; your own good above the common good?
(pause)

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.

All: I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; and 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 intercedes with the Father for us to be holy. Let us ask him to instill in us a new heart: a heart converted to his ways, a heart attentive to his word, a heart reconciled with our brothers and sisters. In our selfish and individualistic world we ask for a generous and a fraternal heart.
R. Give us a new heart

In our divided and violent world we ask for a heart without borders and full of peace toward all.
R. Give us a new heart.

In our superficial and vane world, we ask for a profound heart anchored on your will.
R. Give us a new heart.

In our world full of suffering and hopelessness, we ask for a strong and fighting heart.

R. Give us a new heart.

In a world without forgiveness, we ask for a compassionate heart.

R. Give us a new heart.

In a world rejecting your ways, we ask for a courageous and clean heart.

R. Give us a new heart.

OUR FATHER

Presider: Now let us turn to God our Father and ask him to deliver us from all evil:

All: 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 all evil. Amen.

Presider: Father, our source of life, you know our weakness. May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand and walk more readily in your ways. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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 (or at least extends his right hand) and gives the 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: *A psalm, hymn or litany from the parish repertoire*

CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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

R. Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

The priest blesses all present:

May the Lord guide your hearts in the way of his love and fill you with Christ-like patience.

R. Amen.

May he give you strength to walk in newness of life and to please him in all things.

R. Amen.

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

The deacon or other ministers or the priest himself dismisses the assembly:

The Lord has freed you from your sins. With a new and reconciled heart go in peace.

R. Thanks be to God.