

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

"Let us cast off deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light."

2009

Preparations:

- Hospitality ministers should be scheduled to welcome the assembly as they arrive and to distribute worship aids.
- Lectors should be scheduled to proclaim the readings and assist in the proclamation of the Examination of Conscience.
- A musician and cantor should lead the assembly in song. Instrumental music could be played quietly during individual confession.
- The lectionary should be placed at the ambo with the readings prepared ahead of time.
- Stations for confessors should be designated ahead of time. Priests might stand or sit in isolated areas around the main body of the church to receive penitents. In this way, the communal nature of the rite is maintained.
- Lighting may be subdued. Candles should be lit near the ambo (and altar if desired). The appropriate number of candles on the Advent Wreath should be lit as well.
- For the sake of simplicity, the presider (with the deacon if he is present) alone could walk in the procession, and other priests could be seated in reserved pews or all can walk in the procession.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Opening Hymn

Greeting

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

All: And also with you.

Introduction

Presider: Now is the time to wake from our sleep, for our salvation is close at hand. The night is ending and the day draws near. Let us cast off deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us live honestly as children of the light that we may be ready in mind and heart to receive Christ once again into our lives.

Opening Prayer

Presider: Let us pray.

(Pause for a moment of silence)

Lord our God,

**you are patient with sinners
and accept our desire to make amends.
We acknowledge our sins
and are resolved to change our lives.
Help us to celebrate this sacrament of
your mercy
so that we may reform our lives
and receive from you the gift of
everlasting joy.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

*The following are suggested readings. Alternative readings may
be selected.*

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| First Reading | Isaiah 58:7-10 (Lect. no. 73, Vol I) |
| Responsorial Psalm | Psalm 112: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 or Psalm 33: 1-2, 4-5, 18-19, 20-22 |
| Second Reading | Ephesians 5:8-14 (Lect. no. 31, Vol. I) |

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Matthew 4:12-17 (Lect. no. 67, Vol. I – short form)

Homily

Examination of Conscience

The assembly is now invited to make an examination of conscience. This can be done in silence or by using the examination of conscience below. One reader alone may read the examination or two readers might alternate between sections. An acclamation/response may be sung between each section.

Reader 1: The Gospel tells us to “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

**Do I seek reconciliation with God and with others?
Do I offer forgiveness or hold grudges? Do I allow my anger to get the best of me? Am I faithful in my relationships? Do I participate in gossip or other hurtful conversations? Do I seek ways of peace? Do I build bridges of care or do I look down upon those who are less fortunate, especially the poor, the elderly, the sick, strangers, and people of other races? Do I extend God’s reconciliation beyond the boundaries of my family to the larger world? Do I actively seek to build the kingdom of God here on earth?**

We have sinned against you Lord.

[Sung Response – Kyrie Eleison or Be Merciful, O Lord or some other appropriate response]

Reader 2: St. Paul calls us to live as children of the light.

Do I seek the light of Christ by reading Scripture, praying daily, and doing what the Gospel demands of me? Do I have a relationship with God, seeking his will for my life? Do I participate in the sacraments regularly? Do I keep holy the Lord's Day? Do I trust in God's goodness, especially in times of crisis and doubt? Do I live my life in the light of Christ? Does my relationship with God make a difference in the way I live my life daily?

We have sinned against you Lord.

[Sung Response – Kyrie Eleison or Be Merciful, O Lord or some other appropriate response]

Reader 1: The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then your light shall break forth like the dawn."

Do I share what I have with the poor? Do I care for the sick, the elderly, the afflicted? Do I seek to give shelter to the homeless and to clothe the naked? Do I speak out against oppression, false accusation, and malicious speech?

Continue onto the next section.

Reader 2:

Do I reverence life? Do I reverence my body? Do I respect others? Do I reverence my family by contributing to their well-being and happiness? Do I reverence all of creation by caring for the environment? Am I concerned for the good and prosperity of the human community or do I spend my life caring only for myself? Does my life reflect God's presence in the world?

We have sinned against you Lord.

[Sung Response – Kyrie Eleison or Be Merciful, O Lord or some other appropriate response]

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

The deacon or another minister invites all to kneel or to bow.

**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.

All stand for the litany of repentance.

Litany of Repentance

Presider: Let us turn to Christ with confidence and ask his mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:** You came into the world to seek and save what was lost.

All: Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:** You brought light to our darkness and led us by your truth.

All: Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:** You came into the world to give us life, life in its fullness.

All: Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:** You change hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

All: Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:** In your mercy free us from the past and enable us to begin a new life of holiness.

All: Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon/
Minister:**

Make us a living sign, a light for all nations,
a people reconciled with you and with each
other.

All:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord's Prayer

Presider:

**In obedience to Christ himself,
let us join in prayer to the Father,
asking him to forgive us as we forgive
others.**

All:

Our Father. . .

The priest concludes:

Presider:

Lord our God,

**on the first day of creation
you made the light
that scatters all darkness.**

**Let Christ, the light of all 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.

Individual Confession and Absolution

The presider and other confessors move to their designated locations to hear individual confessions and to offer individual absolution.

The presider may wish to invite the assembly to remain in the church if there is to be a common ending.

Proclamation of Praise for God's Mercy

When individual confessions have been completed, the presiding minister invites all present to offer thanks for God's gracious mercy and encourages them to do good works. It is fitting that a hymn or psalm of praise be sung.

Hymn of Praise: *Canticle of Mary or*
 Psalm 136
 Psalm 32
 Psalm 98
 Psalm 100
 Psalm 145
 Psalm 146

Or some other appropriate hymn of praise.

Concluding Prayer

Presider: **Lord,**
 Your goodness and mercy are boundless.
 Look on your sons and daughters
 gathered here in the name of your
 Son.
 We thank you for all your gifts
 and ask you to keep us always as your
 family,

**full of living faith,
firm hope,
and sincere love for you and for
our neighbor.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Concluding Rite

Blessing

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

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen.

Dismissal

**Deacon/
Presider:** **The Lord has freed you from your sins.
Go in peace.**

All: Thanks be to God.

Concluding Hymn: *A hymn may be sung.*