“Be Reconciled to God and to One Another”

INTRODUCTORY RITES

GATHERING SONG: There’s A Wideness in God’s Mercy or I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say or another appropriate hymn

GREETING:

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

And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION: (in these or similar words)

My brothers and sisters,

We gather this day/night because we are sinners. We come, though, with the firm conviction that we are approaching a merciful God. Knowing this, we find the courage to change, to become a holy people.

Tonight (today) we seek reconciliation with our God and with each other. St. Paul reminds us that we are ambassadors for Christ, for he has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Christ not only offers to us his mercy, he expects us to live in a spirit of mercy and forgiveness.

Let us pray for the courage to seek God’s forgiveness and the willingness to offer forgiveness to those who have hurt us.
OPENING PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray.

(Pause)

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 readings are suggested readings. Other readings may be chosen. The readings are provided at the end of the presider’s text.)

First Reading: Ezekiel 11:14-21  (Reading provided below)

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 130: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21  (Reading provided below or Sunday Lect. C, no. 33)

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35  (Reading provided below or Sunday, Lect. A, no. 130)
Examination of Conscience:

Presider: My brothers and sisters,
The Lord says, “Love one another as I have loved you.”
As we seek to be reconciled to God and one another,
let us call to mind those times when we have failed to love.

The proclamation of the Examination of Conscience may be alternated
between two readers. It should be read slowly and deliberately so that the
assembly can reflect upon what is being said.

Reader 1: Do I have a genuine love for my neighbors?
   Or, do I use them for my own ends?
Have I failed to love by failing to be honest and
   trustworthy?
Do I engage in gossip or other harmful actions?

Reader 2: Do I contribute to the well-being and happiness of my
   family and society by my patience and genuine
   love?
Do I show respect for others by listening
   and by accepting them as they are?
Or, am I quick to judge? Do I make hurtful remarks?

Reader 1: Do I share my possessions with the less fortunate?
   Do I do my best to help the victims of oppression,
   misfortune and poverty?
Or, do I look down on my neighbor, especially the
   poor, the sick, the elderly, strangers, people of
   other races?

Reader 2: Does my life reflect the mission I received at Baptism?
   Do I share in the apostolic and charitable works of
   the Church?
Do I give of my time and talent for the
building of the Kingdom?
Or, am I too busy to offer time in prayer and service of others? Am I too busy to go to Mass?

Reader 1: Am I honest and just at work or school?
Do I exercise authority with compassion? Do I promote justice, morality, and harmony in my place of work?
Am I concerned with the good and prosperity of the human community?
Or, am I only concerned about my well-being?

Reader 2: Am I estranged from others through quarrels, insults, or anger?
Have I failed to forgive? Do I harbor hatred and the desire for revenge?
Have I been willing to ask forgiveness?
Have I been willing to offer forgiveness?

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

The presider or deacon invites the assembly to kneel and pray.

Presider:

My brothers and sisters, let us call to mind the goodness of God our Father, and acknowledge our sins, so that we may receive his merciful forgiveness.

All pray together:
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.

LITANY

All stand for the Litany.

Presider:

In his great love Christ willingly suffered and died for our sins and for the sins of all humanity. Let us come before the Lord with faith and hope to pray for the salvation of the world.

Deacon/Minister: By your death you reconciled us with the Father and brought salvation.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon/Minister: You gave yourself up for us to redeem us from all sin and to prepare for yourself a holy people, marked as your own, devoted to good works.

All: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon/Minister: You became the source of salvation for all who obey you.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon/Minister: You told us that the whole law depends on love of God and of our neighbor.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon/Minister: You give light to our darkness and lead us to your truth.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon/Minister: Make us a living sign of your love for all to see: people reconciled with you and with each other.

All: Lord, have mercy.

LORD’S PRAYER

The presider invites all to pray:

Presider: Now, in obedience to Christ himself, let us join in prayer to the Father, asking him to forgive us as we forgive others.

Our Father. . .

The presider concludes:
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. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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.

PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE FOR GOD’S MERCY

A hymn or psalm of praise for God’s mercy may be sung at this time.

CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God,

creator and ruler of your kingdom of light,
in your great love for this world you gave up your only Son for our salvation.

His cross has redeemed us,
his death has given us life,
his resurrection has raised us to glory.

Through him we ask you to be always present among your family.

Teach us to be reverent in the presence of your glory; fill our hearts with faith,
our days with good works,
our lives with your love;
may your truth be on our lips
and your wisdom in all our actions
that we may receive the reward of everlasting life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Rite of Penance #208

BLESSING

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

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

May almighty God bless you,

DISMISSAL

The deacon or the priest himself dismisses the assembly.

Deacon/ The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace.
Priest Thanks be to God.

CONCLUDING HYMN

SUGGESTED READINGS
First Reading: Ezekiel 11: 14 -21

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel. 11:14-21

Thus the word of the Lord came to me:
   Son of man, it is about your kinsmen,
   your fellow exiles, and the whole house of Israel
   that the inhabitants of Jerusalem say,
   “They are far away from the Lord;
   to us the land of Israel has been given as our possession.”

Therefore say: Thus says the Lord God:
   Though I have removed them far among the nations
   and scattered them over foreign countries-
   and was a while their only sanctuary
   in the countries to which they had gone-
   I will gather you from the nations
   and assemble you from the countries over which you
   have been scattered,
   and I will restore to you the land of Israel.
They shall return to it and remove from it all its
detestable abominations.
I will give them a new heart and put a new spirit
   within them;
   I will remove the stony heart from their bodies,
   and replace it with a natural heart,
   so that they will live according to my statutes,
   and observe and carry out my ordinances;
   thus they shall be my people and I will be their God.
But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their
detestable abominations,
   I will bring down their conduct upon their heads, says
   the Lord God.

The Word of the Lord.

Psalm 130 - sung

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.
Brothers and sisters:

Whoever is in Christ is a new creation:
the old things have passed away;
behold, new things have come.
And all this is from God,
who has reconciled us to himself through Christ
and given to us the ministry of reconciliation,
namely, God was reconciling the world to himself
in Christ,
not counting their trespasses against them
and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
So we are ambassadors for Christ,
as if God were appealing through us.
We implore you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.
For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin,
so that he might become the righteousness of God
in him.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

Deacon/Priest: The Lord be with you.
All: And with your spirit.

Deacon/Priest: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Peter approached Jesus and asked him,
   “Lord, if my brother sins against me,
   how often must I forgive him?
As many as seven times?”
Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but
   seventy seven times.
That is why the Kingdom of heaven may be likened to
   a king
   who decided to settle accounts with his servants.
When he began the accounting,
   a debtor was brought before him who owed him a
   huge amount.
Since he had no way of paying it back,
   his master ordered him to be sold,
   along with his wife, his children, and all his property,
   in payment of the debt.
At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said,
   ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’
Moved with compassion the master of that servant
   let him go and forgave him the loan.
When that servant had left, he found one of his
   fellow servants
   who owed him a much smaller amount.
He seized him and started to choke him, demanding,
   ‘Pay back what you owe.’
Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him,
   ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’
But he refused.
Instead, he had him put in prison
   until he paid back the debt.
Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened,
   they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master
   and reported the whole affair.
His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You
   wicked servant!
I forgave your entire debt because you begged me to.
Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant,
as I had pity on you?’
Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the entire debt.
So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord.