

# SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE

## ADVENT 2011

**“God-with-us comes. He calls God’s people to be we-with-God”**

**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 confident that God, our Father,  
who makes all things new in the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
will bless us during this time of prayerful reflection and preparation  
to receive the sacrament of His loving forgiveness.

We bring before our God  
our need to be able to forgive,  
our need to believe we are forgiven,  
and our need to let go of resentments, deceit, intolerance, judgments  
and our need to accept the possibilities of new beginnings.

Let us take a moment of silence to reflect on what it is and where it is we need forgiveness in our lives.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

**Presider:** Let us pray to the Father of Jesus, the Father of hope for God's people.

Eternal and merciful Father,  
we come before you fully aware of our need for reconciliation.  
and to receive your mercy and grace.  
Open our eyes to repent from the evil and hopelessness of our sins.  
Touch our hearts and convert our ways to your law of love.

Where sin has divided and scattered,  
may your love make one again;  
where sin has brought weakness,  
may your power heal and strengthen;  
where sin has brought death,  
may your Spirit raise us to new life.

Christ's visit offers us a renewed covenant to love you and our own flesh.  
Following in His footsteps,  
we want to believe, to pray and to live as God's holy people.  
We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
for ever and ever.

**R. Amen.**

## **CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD**

First Reading            **Isaiah 40:25-31** *The Lord God is almighty and gives strength to the fainting*  
(Lectionary: first reading of Wednesday of second week of Advent)

Responsorial Psalm    **Psalm 103** *O bless the Lord my soul!*  
(Lectionary: responsorial psalm of Wednesday of second week of Advent)

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

Gospel                    **Luke 1:67-79** *The daybreak from on high has visited us.*  
(Lectionary: gospel of December 24, Mass in the morning)

## **HOMILY**

### **Homily Suggestions:**

*Both readings are a hymn to a God who will not abandon his people to their weakness and to their sins, but with his power will let not one of them be missing. The creator of all promises strength and vigor, the people will soar as with eagles' wings. Zecharia's song of praise to the merciful God of Israel is full of gratitude: the people will be free from the enemies, free from the darkness of their sins, free to worship God without fear, free to march in the ways of justice and peace.*

## **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 has enlightened us:

**“Blessed be the Lord, for he has come to his people and set them free”**

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

**“Through his prophets he promised that he would save us from our enemies”**

- Am I violent toward others? Am I short of patience and respect toward others?
- Have I been sexually abusive?
- Do I respect the property of others?

**“He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant”**

- Am I sensitive to other peoples' pain and suffering?
- 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 against it?

**“He swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from our enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.”**

- 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?

**“You, my child, will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins”**

- Have I sought the truth, defended it, and communicated it to others?
- 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?

**”The dawn from on high shall break upon us to shine on those who dwell in darkness and to guide our feet into the way of peace”**

- Have I taken advantage of other peoples' weaknesses?
- Have I led others stray by my bad example?
- Am I willing to forgive and ask for forgiveness? Am I grateful to others?

## **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 say:** 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. Anchored in Him, we pray to be filled of His healing grace:

In our lack of integrity, and in our need to love and be loved, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In the emptiness of our omissions and in failing to make a difference, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In the hopelessness of our addictions, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In our infidelity to gospel values and in our mediocrity of virtue, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In our failure to give convincing and courageous testimony of your covenanted love, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In our desire to sow the seeds of justice and peace around us, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In our pursuit of true reconciliation with you and with each other, we long for you, Lord

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

In our thirst to be compassionate as you are compassionate, we long for you, Lord.

*R. Be with us, Lord. We want to be your people.*

## **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 say:** 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. **R. 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.**

### **CONCLUDING RITE**

*The priest blesses all present:*

May the Father, who has reconciled us in his love,  
continue to shower his blessings upon us. **R. Amen.**

May the Son, who died and rose to save us,  
forgive us our sins and help us to love one another more. **R. Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit of God, who makes us his temples of love and praise,  
give us unending joy and peace. **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 is making you a sign of hope. Go in peace. **R. Thanks be to God.**