

ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE
(Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution)

Advent has a twofold character: as a season to prepare for Christmas when Christ's first coming to us is remembered and as a season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's second coming at the end of time. Advent is thus a period for devout and joyful expectation. While not strictly a penitential season, the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance as a means to deepen conversion to receive both comings of Christ is advantageous to the Faithful.

OPENING HYMN

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy Spirit

All: Amen

Presider: From the Christ who was, who is, and who is to come, grace, light and peace be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Presider: My brothers and sisters, Advent is a time of preparation, when we make ready to celebrate the mystery of our Lord's coming as one like us, the beginning of our redemption. Advent also moves us to look forward with renewed hope to the second coming of Christ, when God's plan of salvation will be brought to fulfillment. We are reminded too of our Lord's coming to each one of us at the hour of our death. We must make sure that he will find us prepared for his coming, as the gospel tells us: "Blessed are those servants who are found awake when the Lord comes." This service of penance and conversion is meant to make us ready in mind and in heart for the coming of Christ, which we are soon to celebrate in the Solemnity of Christmas.

Let us pray:

Eternal Son of God,
creator of the human family
and our redeemer,
come at last among us
as the child of the Immaculate Virgin,
and redeem the world.
Reveal Your loving presence
by which You set us free from sin
in becoming one like us
in all things but sin,
for you live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

If there are several readings a psalm or other appropriate song or even a period of silence should intervene between them, so that everyone may understand the Word of God more deeply and give it heartfelt assent. If there is only one reading, it is preferable that it be from the Gospel. (Rite of Penance, 51)

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-7a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 85

“Lord, let us see Your kindness, and grant us Your salvation.”

Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-12

Alleluia: The Spirit and the Bride say: “Come.”
Let all who hear answer: “Come.”
Come, Lord Jesus.

Gospel: Luke 3:3-17

Homily

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

Examination of Conscience

The form of the Examination of Conscience suggested in Appendix III of the Rite of Penance (available on the Worship Resources webpage) may be adapted to meet the needs of the faithful gathered. A period of silence should always be included so that each person may personally examine his or her conscience.

Act of Repentance

Presider: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us that we may see his glory full of grace and truth. For those times and occasions we have failed to acknowledge Christ in creation and in one another, let us repent of our actions and seek reconciliation and peace, as we pray:

All: 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.

The Lord's Prayer

Presider: Confident in God's never-failing mercy and in the joyful knowledge of God who comes to our aid in all times and places, let us pray in the words that Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, gave us: Our Father . . .

All: 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.

Presider: Lord our God,
on the first day of creation
you made the light that scatters all darkness.
Let Christ, the light of 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.

All: Amen.

Introduction to the Places of Confession and Invitation to the Sacrament

Presider: Because we are many, we invite those seeking the sacrament to be mindful of the many seeking the graces of the sacrament in a limited amount of time. Those seeking spiritual direction or personal counseling are asked to consider another time for this ministry. The priests will be in the body of the church and welcome you for individual confession. Those sitting in the church are asked to pray for those celebrating the sacrament and to remain in the church until the end of the liturgy to express our solidarity as a community. At this time, I invite the priests, who have generously joined us to celebrate this sacrament, to take their places in the church.

Individual Confession and Absolution

The assembly remains seated and penitents move to a confessor when one becomes available. As penitents approach, they are greeted by the priest-confessor and with the Sign of the Cross; they then confess their sins. After receiving absolution, penitents return to their places in the assembly to pray.

CONCLUDING RITES

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

All: Amen.

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

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

All: Amen.

Presider: The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace to prepare a way for the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN