



## **Advent Examination of Conscience**

### **Prepare Ye the Way!**

The church gives us these hopeful images to encourage us in our own preparation to welcome Jesus at Christmas. God loves it when we come to him, ready to straighten the crooked paths and smooth out the bumpy roads! And what better way to get ready than to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Start by sitting with the Holy Spirit in prayer. Ask him to help you identify the areas of your life that need God's healing and giving touch. Use the questions below to help get you started on your own personal dialogue with God.

### **Relationship with God**

Knowing how much God loves me, have I pursued my relationship with him wholeheartedly? Have I turned to the Lord in prayer or Scripture every day? Have I sought him through faithful Mass attendance and in the sacraments?

Have I cluttered my path to God by the words I have said? Are there ways that I have allowed foul language or even deception to drive a wedge between the Lord and me?

Have I allowed desire for material things to rise up as mountains that can block my way to God? Have I allowed what others think of me to dictate my choices or actions?

### **Relationship with Others**

If I feel burdened in certain relationships, is it because I have harbored hurts and built a wall against the people involved? Are there resentments in my heart against a person or group of people that are like a chasm that I can't get across?

Am I generous with my time, material goods, and love? Do I reach across the gap of my discomfort to give practical help to those in need? Have I taken something that is not mine or stolen someone's good reputation through gossip?

Has my way of looking at others been crooked, ignoring the life of God in them and valuing them for what they could give me? Have I allowed pride to blind me to the worth of those who don't agree with me?

### **Hope for the Way Ahead**

When we come to Confession, we can be sure that the Holy Spirit wants to make our path to Jesus straight. He opens our eyes and our hearts so that we can receive forgiveness and be transformed. God clothes us in his mercy, making us a new creation in Christ. Like a newly paved road, straight and clear, we are changed and renewed. Strengthened by God's life in us, we can open ourselves to receive the King of Glory!