

ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE



INTRODUCTORY RITES

HYMN

Wake, awake, for night is flying;
The watchmen on the heights are crying:
Awake, Jerusalem, at last!
Midnight hears the welcome voices
And at the thrilling cry rejoices;
Come forth, ye virgins, night is past;
The Bridegroom comes, awake;
Your lamps with gladness take;
Alleluia! And for His marriage feast prepare
For ye must go and meet Him there.

Zion hears the watchmen singing,
And all her heart with joy is springing;
She wakes, she rises from her gloom;
For her Lord comes down all glorious,
The strong in grace, in truth victorious.
Her Star is risen, her Light is come.
Ah come, Thou blessèd One, God's own belovèd Son:
Alleluia! We follow till the halls we see
Where Thou hast bid us sup with Thee.

Text: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, Philipp Nicholi, 1556-1608
Translation: Catherine Winkworth, 1858
Tune: WACHET AUF, 89 8 89 8 66 4 44 8; Philipp Nicholi, 1556-1608

GREETING

After the song the presider greets the people:

Presider:

Grace, mercy and peace
from God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son
be with you in truth and love.

All: Amen

Then the presider or another minister speaks briefly about the importance and purpose of the celebration in these or similar words.

My brothers and sisters, Advent is a time of preparation, when we make ready to celebrate the mystery of our Lord's coming as man, 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" [Luke 12:37]. This service of penance is meant to make us ready in mind and heart for the coming of Christ, which we are soon to celebrate in the Mass of Christmas.

OPENING PRAYER

Presider:

Let us pray.

All pray in silence for a brief period.

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.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The following reading may be found in the Lectionary at number 199 in the Weekdays of Advent, December 23, years I and II.

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst.

Reader: A reading from the book of the Prophet Zephaniah

Shout for joy, daughter Zion!
Sing joyfully, Israel!
Be glad and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has removed the judgment against you,
he has turned away your enemies;
The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst,
you have no further misfortune to fear.
On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged!
The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a mighty savior,
He will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in his love,
He will sing joyfully because of you,
as one sings at festivals.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

The psalm should be sung.

The following suggested psalm is the proper psalm for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, cycle "A".

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 24, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

The earth is the LORD's and all it holds,
the world and those who dwell in it.
For he founded it on the seas,
established it over the rivers.

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

Who may go up the mountain of the LORD?
Who can stand in his holy place?
The clean of hand and pure of heart,
who has not given his soul to useless things,
what is vain.

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

He will receive blessings from the LORD,
and justice from his saving God.
Such is the generation that seeks him,
that seeks the face of the God of Jacob.”

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

The following reading may be found in the Lectionary at number 31 as the second reading for the Fourth Sunday of Lent, cycle “A”.

SECOND READING

1 John 2:3-11

Those who love their brother remain in the light.

Reader: A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved:

The way we may be sure that we know Jesus
is to keep his commandments.

Whoever says, "I know him," but does not
keep his commandments
is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoever keeps his word,
the love of God is truly perfected in him.

This is the way we may know that we are
in union with him:

whoever claims to abide in him ought to walk
just as he walked.

Beloved, I am writing no new commandment
to you

but an old commandment that you had
from the beginning.

The old commandment is the word
that you have heard.

And yet I do write a new commandment to you,
which holds true in him and among you,

for the darkness is passing away,
and the true light is already shining.

Whoever says he is in the light,

yet hates his brother, is still in the darkness.

Whoever loves his brother remains in the light,

and there is nothing in him to cause a fall.
Whoever hates his brother is in darkness;
he walks in darkness
and does not know where he is going
because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

If the acclamation is not sung, it is omitted.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Stay awake and be ready!
For you do not know on what day the Son of Man will come.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The following is the short form of the gospel reading at number 117 in the lectionary, the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, cycle "C".

GOSPEL

Luke 12: 35-40

You also must be prepared.

Deacon: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Deacon: + A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Gird your loins and light your lamps
and be like servants who await their master's return
from a wedding,
ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks.

Blessed are those servants

whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival.

Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself,

have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them.

And should he come in the second or third watch

and find them prepared in this way,

blessed are those servants.

"Be sure of this:

if the master of the house had known the hour
when the thief was coming,

he would not have let his house be broken into.
You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect,
the Son of Man will come.”

Deacon: The gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

The assembly is now invited to make an examination of conscience.

This may be done in silence or by using the examination of conscience below.

One reader may read it alone, or two readers might alternate sections.

If read aloud, allow a brief period of silence between each section.

For failings in our private life:

- Abusing or neglecting the gift of our body, a temple of the Holy Spirit
- Overindulging in food or alcohol
- Engaging in sinful sexual practices
- Becoming complacent or self-satisfied

For failings in our families:

- Hurting or neglecting our families
- Withholding our love from those closest to us
- Withdrawing into our own pursuits
- Arguing too easily
- Failing to say we were sorry
- Failing to say we were wrong

For failures in our communities:

- Being a disruptive force because of our own ego
- Failing to be a peacemaker
- Intentionally excluding others
- Being greedy in the face of poverty

For our failures with our God:

- Failing to put our relationship with God first
- Failing to make time for regular private prayer and for worship with others
- Making important choices in our life without listening for God's voice
- Holding back when God was calling us to be an instrument of grace
- Failing to offer back to God the gifts he has given us

If read aloud, this Examination of Conscience should conclude with a period of silence so that each person may personally examine his or her conscience.

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

Presider:

Directing the assembly.

Please kneel.

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 say 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 OF REPENTANCE

Presider:

Directing the assembly.

Please stand.

By human weakness we have disfigured the holiness of the Church:
pardon all our sins and restore us to full communion with our brothers and
sisters.

Presider: In your goodness, forgive our sins against the unity of your
family,

All: --make us one in heart, one in spirit.

Presider: Touch our hearts and change our lives,
All: --make us grow always in your friendship.

Presider: Receive us as we come before you with humble and contrite hearts,

All: --with your pardon give us also your peace.

Presider: Restore us, Lord, to your favor, and give us joy in your presence,

All: --may our glory be to serve you with all our hearts

Presider:

Let us now pray to God our Father
in the words Christ gave us,
and ask him for his forgiveness
and protection from all evil.

All say or sing together:

Our Father...

The presider concludes:

Presider:

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.

All: Amen.

INVITATION TO INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION

Presider:

Directing the assembly.

Please be seated.

Before we begin the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our priests who have joined us this afternoon.

Frs. _____,
_____,
_____,
_____,
_____,
_____.

I would also like to thank all of you who have come together to pray, seeking Christ's mercy.

While we sing the next song, our confessors will process to their confessional stations. They are located in these places in the church:

Fr. _____ will be _____.

I will be _____.

At the end of the song I invite you to stay and to line-up at one of the confessional stations.

After your confession is heard you may remain here to pray for a time if you wish, but are otherwise dismissed.

For those of you who decide not to partake of the sacrament at this time, I invite you to go to individual confession at your earliest convenience.

Confessions are regularly heard at _____ parish:

on _____(day) from _____ to _____ (time)

PRAYER

Presider:

Gesturing for the assembly to stand.

Let us pray.

All pray in silence for a brief period.

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 prepare to meet your Son,
so that we may give him a fitting welcome.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Confessors process to their stations during the song.

HYMN

The King shall come when morning dawns,
And light triumphant breaks.
When beauty gilds the eastern hills,
And life to joy awakes.

Not, as of old, a little child,
To suffer and to die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
That lights the morning sky.

O brighter than that glorious morn
Shall this fair morning be,
When Christ, our King, in beauty comes,
And we His face shall see.

And let the endless bliss begin,
By weary saints foretold,
When right shall triumph over wrong,
And truth shall be extolled.

The King shall come when morning dawns,
And light and beauty brings:
Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy people pray,
Come quickly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1857-1925;
Tune: MORNING SONG, CM; John Wyeth, 1770-1858

INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Then the penitents go to the priests designated for individual confession, 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 gives him or her absolution. Everything else which is customary in individual confession is omitted.

After receiving absolution the penitents may return to the main body of the church and spend some time in private prayer.

Soft, unobtrusive instrumental music may be played for a time during the transition to individual confession.