

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING:** *Milachi 3:1-7* *Sit*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** *Psalm 85:1-13*

**Response:** Lord, let us see your kindness and grant us your salvation.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Stand*

**All:** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am coming quickly, says the Lord,  
and I will repay each man. Come, Lord Jesus. Alleluia.

**GOSPEL:** *Matthew 3:11-12*

**SHARED REFLECTION** *Sit*

### 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 alone may read the questions or two readers might alternate. Allow a brief period of silence between each one.*

#### Leader:

- How have I failed to worship God in private and communal prayer?
- Have I tried to grow in the life of the Spirit through prayer and the reading of the word of God?
- Do I trust God's goodness and providence, even in times of crisis and doubt?
- Do I fulfil my commitments as a member of my faith community?
- Do I look for opportunities to share the Good News of Christ in my daily life, especially with my family and friends?
- How have I failed to use the gifts of God in daily living?
- How have I failed in my relationships with others?
- Do I share my time and my treasure with others in need?
- Do I fail to speak out on behalf of the poor or the oppressed?
- Do I use the earth's resources wisely?
- Do I truly forgive others, and work to reconcile relationships that have been wounded?
- Do I purchase a lot of material goods that I don't really need?
- Do I love all people freely?

- Do I work to overcome my own prejudices, and encourage others to do the same?

*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** *Kneel*

Leader: Christ our Lord came to call sinners into his Father's kingdom.  
Let us now make an act of sorrow in our hearts and resolve to avoid sin in the future,

*After a brief period of silence, all say together:*

**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, *(striking the breast)* 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** *Stand*

Leader: Lord our God, you know all things.  
You know that we want to be more generous in serving you and our neighbour.  
Look on us with love and hear our prayer.

Leader: Give us the strength to turn away from sin. Lord, have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Help us to be sorry for our sins and to keep our resolutions.  
Lord have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Forgive our sins and have pity on our weakness.  
Lord, have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Give us trust in our goodness  
and make us generous in serving you. Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: God does not want the sinner to die, but to turn to him and live.  
May he be pleased that we have confessed our sinfulness and  
may he show us his mercy as we pray in obedience to his Son.

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**All: Our Father.....**

Leader: 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.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

### **PRAYER AND BLESSING**

Leader: Let us pray.  
May the God of peace fill your hearts with every blessing.  
May he sustain you with his gifts of hope and consolation,  
help you to offer your lives in his service  
and bring you safely to eternal glory.  
May almighty God, the Father, and the Son ✠  
and the Holy Spirit, grant you all that is good.

**All: Amen.**

### **FINAL HYMN**

*An appropriate final hymn is sung.*

## **ADVENT COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE**

### **INTRODUCTORY RITES**

#### **GATHERING & OPENING HYMN**

*Stand*

*An appropriate gathering hymn is sung.*

#### **GREETING**

*After the song the presider greets the people.*

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

**All: And also with you.**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Leader: My brothers and sisters,  
we look forward to celebrating  
the mystery of Christ's coming on the feast of Christmas.  
Let us pray that when he comes  
he may find us awake and ready to receive him.

*All pray in silence.*

Lord our God, maker of the heavens,  
as we look forward to the coming of our redeemer,  
grant us the forgiveness of our sins.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

#### **Acknowledgements**

Material for this Penance Service have been taken from or adapted from *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, International Commission on English in the Liturgy.