



Communal Penance and Reconciliation Service

Pastoral Notes

- This Liturgy can be celebrated either with or without the inclusion of the Rite of Penance, form II.
- It could take the form of a Vigil service, and include times for silent prayer.
- Care should be taken to include a full complement of liturgical ministers (greeters, ushers, music ministers, etc.).
- The Gospel values of mercy, forgiveness, hope, inclusion, peace need to be named.

Opening Song

Greeting

Presider

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

We gather here in this holy year, a time to encounter the great mercy of God and to be renewed by his life-giving Spirit.

**It is a year of Jubilee - a special time for reconciliation,
a time to examine our lives honestly, ask forgiveness, and
be made new. Today, let us ask for a true conversion of heart that we may again walk in
newness of life and that we, ourselves, might in turn be vehicles of the mercy of God to
others.**

Opening Prayer

Presider:

**Brothers and sisters, God calls us to conversion.
Let us ask for the grace to be open to his mercy.**

**Almighty and merciful God,
you have brought us together in the name of your Son
to receive your mercy and your grace in our time.
Open our eyes, touch our hearts and convert us to yourself.
Where sin has divided and scattered,
may your love make one again;
where it has brought weakness,
may your power heal and strengthen;
where it has brought death,
may your Spirit raise to new life.**

**Give us a new heart to love you,
so that our lives may reflect the image of your Son.
May the world see the glory of Christ revealed in your Church,
and come to know that he is the one whom you have sent,
Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.**

Reading: *Readings and Psalms may be taken from the Lectionary, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions: #15 For Reconciliation, #11 For the Evangelization of Peoples, #14 For Peace and Justice, #27 For the Remission of Sins, #28 For the Promotion of Charity or To Foster Harmony or For Family and Friends.*

Responsorial Psalm



Reading

Gospel

Homily

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Introduction

(The Presider gives a brief introduction to the Examination of Conscience.)

A Sung Refrain may be used in between sections of the Examination of Conscience.
Suggestions might be:

Presider or other Minister:

Is God the most important thing in my life, or do I place money, success, power, or other worldly things above him?

Do I make time to pray each day? Do I participate in the liturgy on Sundays and holy days?

Do I trust in the mercy of God?

Do I strive to share the good news of Jesus with those I meet?

(sung refrain)

Do I treat all people with the respect they deserve as children of God?

Do I consciously practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy?

Do I give in to anger and impatience when dealing with others?

Do I give of my time, treasure, and talent to help the community, especially the less fortunate?

Do I own my possessions, or do my possessions own me?

Do I respect my body, or do I abuse it through improper use of drugs, alcohol, sex, or lack of exercise and rest?

(sung refrain)

Do I speak out when the rights of other are abused, or do I stand by silently?

Do I share, to the best of my ability, in the work of promoting justice, harmony and love in human relations?

Have I damaged someone's reputation through malicious speech or gossip?

Have I refused someone forgiveness when they ask?

Do I strive to speak the truth and practice what I preach?



(sung refrain)

RITE OF RECONCILIATION

(If the Sacrament of Penance is not included, the Examination of Conscience may be followed by a Proclamation of Praise for God's Mercy – see below)

General Confession of Sins

Presider or other minister:

**My sisters and brothers, let us turn to our merciful God
and ask forgiveness of all our sins.**

All: I confess to almighty God . . .

Presider or other minister:

**Our God seeks out what is lost, leads home the abandoned,
binds up what is broken, and gives strength to the weak;
let us ask him to help us.**

R. Lord, heal our weakness.

Your mercy is our hope: welcome us to the sacrament of reconciliation. R.

Give us the will to change our lives, and the lives of others, by charity, good example and prayer. R.

Make us a living sign of your mercy for all to see: people reconciled with you and with each other. R.

Through the sacrament of reconciliation may we grow in your peace and seek to spread it throughout the world. R.

In this sign of your love, you forgive us our sins: may it teach us to love others and to forgive their sins against us. R.

Forgive us our sins, lead us in the way of goodness and love, and bring us to the reward of everlasting peace. R.

In your mercy free us from the past and enable us to begin a new life of holiness. R.

Presider or another minister:

With confidence in God's mercy, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father . . .

Presider:

**Lord, hear the prayers of your people.
Look upon us with kindness and show us your compassion
that we may be reconciled to you and walk in newness of life.
Amen.**



Individual Confession and Absolution

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 and gives him/her 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 other priests stand near the one who is presiding over the celebration. The latter 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 in acknowledgment of God's mercy. Examples include:

- In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful (from Taizé: Songs for Prayer)*
- God Has Smiled On Me (from Lead me, Guide me)*
- ¡Que Grande Es Mi Dios! (from Canciones del Pueblo de Dios)*
- Pescador de Hombres*
- or any setting of Psalm 136*

CONCLUDING RITE

Presider: **Lord Jesus Christ, your loving forgiveness knows no limits.
You took our human nature to give us an example of humility
and to make us faithful in every trial.
May we never lose the gifts you have given us,
but if we fall into sin, lift us up by your gift of repentance,
for you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.**

or

**God and Father of us all,
in your great mercy you have forgiven our sins and sent us your peace.
Help us to forgive each other
and to work together to establish peace in the world.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Sign of Peace

Presider: **Before we take our leave, let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.**

Concluding Rite

Presider: **May the Father of Mercy bless us, for we are his children, born to eternal life.
Amen.**

**May the Son show us his saving power, for he died and rose for us.
Amen.**

**May the Spirit give us his gift of holiness and lead us by the right path,
for he dwells in our hearts. Amen.**

May almighty God bless you, + the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit.

[If the leader is a Lay Minister, he or she makes the sign of the cross saying:



**May almighty bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.]**

Presider: **The Lord is full of Mercy; Go in peace.**

All: Thanks be to God.

Closing Song

Excerpts from the English translation of the *Rite of Penance* © 1974