

FORGIVE AS YOU HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN
A PENANCE SERVICE FOR LENT 2024

**THE ORDER FOR RECONCILING SEVERAL PENITENTS
WITH INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

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PREPARATION

- Hospitality Ministers should be recruited to welcome the assembly as they arrive and to distribute worship aids.
- At least two readers should be appointed to proclaim the reading(s), to read the Examination of Conscience, and to lead the Litany of Repentance. They are to be seated in the assembly.
- Musician(s) and cantor(s) should lead the assembly in song. Instrumental music may be played during individual confession. (A list of music suggestions is included herein.)
- A *Lectionary* or the *Order of Penance* should be readied with the appropriate readings.
- Lighting may be subdued. Candle(s) should be lit at the ambo.
- Stations for confessors should be prepared. Priests might stand or sit in isolated areas around the main body of the church to receive penitents. In this way, the communal nature of the rite is maintained. Candles may light these stations.
- For the sake of simplicity, the presider alone or the presider and preacher could participate in the procession. Other priests could be seated in the sanctuary or in a reserved area before the liturgy begins.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

LITURGICAL SONG

When the faithful have gathered, and as the Priest enters the church, if appropriate, a psalm, antiphon, or appropriate song may be sung. (See music suggestions herein.)

SIGN OF THE CROSS

GREETING

Presider: Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

All: And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Sample

Presider: Rightfully, we gather tonight [today] to seek God's forgiveness for our sins. We acknowledge our failings, beg his mercy, and resolve to do better.

But let us also acknowledge that sin has a communal nature.

When we sin, we harm others. When others sin, they often hurt us. When each of us sins, we harm the community, just as our holy deeds benefit the community. Our repentance, too, brings reconciliation within the community – within our family, within our city, and within our world (Cf. *Order of Penance*, 5).

As we seek the grace of God's mercy in this sacrament, let us also acknowledge that, free from sin, "all people of good will may work together for justice and peace in the world" (ibid.)

As we are forgiven, may we be more eager to forgive others.

PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray, brothers and sisters, **(brethren)**
that God, who calls us to conversion,
will grant us the grace of true and fruitful repentance.

Silent prayer

**Graciously hear the prayers of those who call upon you,
we ask, O Lord,
and forgive the sins of those who confess to you,
granting us in your kindness both pardon and peace.
Through Christ our Lord.**

All: Amen.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

The following are suggested readings. Alternative readings may be selected.

“If there are several readings, a Psalm or other appropriate liturgical song or even a period of silence should intervene between them, so that the word of God may be understood more deeply by everyone and heartfelt assent be given to it. If there is only one reading, it is desirable that it be taken from the Gospel” (*Order of Penance* 51).

FIRST READING

Sirach 28:1-7

*Forgive your neighbor's injustice;
then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 130(129): 1-2, 3-4, 5-6b, 6c-8

*With the Lord is mercy,
in him there is plentiful redemption.*

SECOND READING

1 John 1:5- 2:2

*If we acknowledge our sins,
he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins
and cleanse us from every wrongdoing*

VERSE

John 17:17b, 17a

*Your word, O Lord, is truth;
consecrate us in the truth.*

GOSPEL

Luke 17:1-4

*If your brother wrongs you seven times in one day
and returns to you seven times saying, “I am sorry,”
it would help if you forgave him.*

HOMILY

BIBLICAL READINGS

In the new *Order of Penance*, Chapter IV provides “Various Texts to be Used in the Celebration of Reconciliation.” Besides beautiful options for greetings, invitations, and prayers, the chapter lists the following Scripture passages which may be used “For the Reconciliation of Several Penitents.” The text offers multiple options from the Old Testament (32); Psalms (15); New Testament Letters (28); and Gospels (26). [Please see *The Order of Penance*, nos. 101-201].

“The readings proposed here have been selected for the benefit of pastors and the faithful. For diversity, and according to the special nature of the assembly, other readings may be chosen” (OP 101).

II. FOR THE RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS

READINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

101. Gn 3:1-19: *She took some of its fruit and ate it.*
102. Gn 4:1-15: *Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.*
103. Gn 18:17-33: *For the sake of those ten, I will not destroy it.*
104. Ex 17:1-7: *They tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD in our midst or not?”*
105. Ex 20:1-21: *I, the LORD, am your God. You shall not have other gods.*
106. Dt 6:4-9: *Love the LORD, your God, with all your heart.*
107. Dt 9:7-19: *Your people have become depraved; they have already turned aside from the way I pointed out to them.*
108. Dt 30:15-20: *Today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and doom.*
109. 2 Sm 12:1-9, 13: *David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan answered David: “The LORD on his part has forgiven your sin: you shall not die.”*
110. Neh 9:1-20: *The children of Israel gathered together fasting and confessed their sins.*
111. Wis 1:1-16: *Love justice because into a soul that plots evil wisdom enters not, nor dwells she in a body under debt of sin.*
112. Wis 5:1-16: *The hope of the wicked is like thistledown borne on the wind. But the just live forever.*
113. Sir 28:1-7: *Forgive your neighbor’s injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.*
114. Is 1:2-6, 15-18: *Sons have I raised and reared, but they have disowned me!*
115. Is 5:1-7: *My friend had a vineyard. He looked for the crop of grapes, but what it yielded was wild grapes.*
116. Is 43:22-28: *It is I, I, who wipe out, for my own sake, your offenses.*
117. Is 53:1-12: *The LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all.*
118. Is 55:1-11: *Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving.*
119. Is 58:1-11: *Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday.*
120. Is 59:1-4, 9-15: *It is your crimes that separate you from your God.*
121. Jer 2:1-13: *Two evils have my people done: they have forsaken me, the source of living waters; They have dug themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that hold no water.*
122. Jer 7:21-26: *Listen to my voice; then I will be your God and you shall be my people.*
123. Ez 11:14-21: *I will remove the stony heart from their bodies, and replace it with a natural heart, so that they will live according to my statutes.*
124. Ez 18:20-32: *If the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

125. Ez 36:23-28: *I will sprinkle clean water upon you and place a new spirit within you and make you live by my statutes.*
126. Hos 2:16-25: *I will make a covenant for them on that day.*
127. Hos 11:1-11: *I took them in my arms; I drew them with human cords.*
128. Hos 14:2-10: *Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God.*
129. Joel 2:12-19: *Return to me with your whole heart.*
130. Micah 6:1-15: *Do the right and love goodness, and walk humbly with your God.*
131. Micah 7:2-7, 18-20: *The LORD will again have compassion on us and cast into the depths of the sea all our sins.*
132. Zechariah 1:1-6: *Return to me and I will return to you.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

In longer Psalms, a selection of stanzas which form a coherent whole may be chosen instead of the entire Psalm.

133. Ps 13 (12):2-3, 4-5, 6
 R̄. (6a) I trust in your merciful love.
134. Ps 25 (24):1b-3, 4-5, 6, 7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-14, 15-16, 17-18, 19-20, 21-22
 R̄. (16a) Turn to me, Lord, and have mercy on me.
135. Ps 31 (30):2-3a, 3b-4, 5-6
 R̄. (6b) You will redeem us, O Lord, O faithful God.
136. Ps 32 (31):1-2, 3-4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
 R̄. (5c) I will confess my transgression to the Lord.
137. Ps 36 (35):2, 3-4, 5, 6-7, 8, 9-10, 11-13
 R̄. (8) How precious is your mercy, O God!
138. Ps 50 (49):7, 8 and 14-15, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23
 R̄. (23b) To one whose way is blameless, I will show the salvation of God.
139. Ps 51 (50):3-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21
 R̄. (14a) Restore in me the joy of your salvation.
140. Ps 73 (72):1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-17, 18-20, 21-22, 23-24, 25-26, 27-28
 R̄. (28a) For me to be near God is good.
141. Ps 90 (89):1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15, 16-17
 R̄. (14) Fill us, O Lord, with your mercy, and we shall exult all our days.
142. Ps 95 (94):1-2, 3-5, 6-7b, 7c-9, 10-11
 R̄. (7c) O that today you would listen to the voice of the Lord!
143. Ps 119 (118):1 and 10-11, 12-13, 15-16
 R̄. (1) Blessed are those who walk in the law of the Lord.
144. Ps 123 (122):1, 2, 3-4
 R̄. (2e) Our eyes are on the Lord our God.
145. Ps 130 (129):1-2, 3-4, 5-6b, 6c-8
 R̄. (7bc) With the Lord there is mercy, in him is plentiful redemption.
146. Ps 139 (138):1-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15, 16, 17-18, 23-24
 R̄. (23a) O search me, God, and know my heart.
147. Ps 143 (142):1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7, 8, 9-10, 11
 R̄. (10) Teach me to do your will, my God.

READINGS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

148. Rom 3:22-26: *They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus.*

149. Rom 5:6-11: *We boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*
150. Rom 6:2-13: *You must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.*
151. Rom 6:16-23: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
152. Rom 7:14-25: *Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this mortal body? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
153. Rom 12:1-2, 9-19: *Be transformed by the renewal of your mind.*
154. Rom 13:8-14: *Throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.*
155. 2 Cor 5:17-21: *God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ.*
156. Gal 5:16-24: *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires.*
157. Eph 2:1-10: *God, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ.*
158. Eph 4:1-3, 17-32: *Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self.*
159. Eph 5:1-14: *You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.*
160. Eph 6:10-18: *Put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day.*
161. Col 3:1-10, 12-17: *If you were raised with Christ, seek what is above. Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly.*
162. Heb 12:1-5: *In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood.*
163. Jas 1:22-27: *Be doers of the word and not hearers only.*
164. Jas 2:14-26: *What good is it if someone says he has faith but does not have works?*
165. Jas 3:1-12: *If anyone does not fall short in speech, he is a perfect man.*
166. 1 Pt 1:13-23: *You were ransomed not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious Blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished Lamb.*
167. 2 Pt 1:3-11: *Be all the more eager to make your call and election firm.*
168. 1 Jn 1:5—2:2: *If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.*
169. 1 Jn 2:3-11: *Whoever hates his brother, is still in the darkness.*
170. 1 Jn 3:1-24: *We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers.*
171. 1 Jn 4:16-21: *God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.*
172. Rev 2:1-5: *Repent, and do the works you did at first.*
173. Rev 3:14-22: *Because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.*
174. Rev 20:11-15: *All the dead were judged according to their deeds.*
175. Rev 21:1-8: *The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son.*

GOSPEL READINGS

176. Mt 3:1-12: *Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!*
177. Mt 4:12-17: *Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*
178. Mt 5:1-12: *When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and his disciples came to him.*
179. Mt 5:13-16: *Your light must shine before others.*
180. Mt 5:17-47: *But I say to you.*
181. Mt 9:1-8: *Courage, child, your sins are forgiven.*
182. Mt 9:9-13: *I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.*
183. Mt 18:15-20: *You have won over your brother.*
184. Mt 18:21-35: *So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.*
185. Mt 25:31-46: *Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*
186. Mt 26:69-75: *He went out and began to weep bitterly.*
187. Mk 12:28-34: *The first of all the commandments.*

- 188.** Lk 7:36-50: *But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.*
- 189.** Lk 13:1-5: *If you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!*
- 190.** Lk 15:1-10: *There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.*
- 191.** Lk 15:11-32: *While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion.*
- 192.** Lk 17:1-4: *If your brother wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, "I am sorry," you should forgive him.*
- 193.** Lk 18:9-14: *O God, be merciful to me a sinner.*
- 194.** Lk 19:1-10: *The Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.*
- 195.** Lk 23:39-43: *Today you will be with me in Paradise.*
- 196.** Jn 8:1-11: *Go, and from now on do not sin any more.*
- 197.** Jn 8:31-36: *Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.*
- 198.** Jn 15:1-8: *He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.*
- 199.** Jn 15:9-14: *You are my friends if you do what I command you.*
- 200.** Jn 19:13-37: *They will look upon him whom they have pierced.*
- 201.** Jn 20:19-23: *Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them.*

A SAMPLE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Other formulas are found on page 54

Presider: Sisters and brothers,
our Father knows all our failings,
but asks us to call them to mind
so that we may seek out his forgiveness.

Minister #1:

- Do I pray daily?
- Do I receive the sacraments regularly?
- Do I keep Sundays and holy days sacred?
- Do I fulfill my commitments as a member of my faith community?
- What is my attitude toward the sacrament of reconciliation?
- 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?

Minister #2:

- Do I respect my own body as a gift from God?
- Do I control my vices, including abuses of food and drink?
- Have I made good use of the gifts God has given me?
- Do I work too hard and too long? Do I neglect my family and health?
- Have I been lazy and given too much time to leisure or entertainment?

Minister #1:

- In my household, have I contributed to the well-being and happiness of the rest of my family? Am I patient? Am I loving?
- Do I treat my parents with respect?
- Am I ever angry with those I love?
- Have I been faithful in my relationships?

Minister #2:

- Have I imposed my will on others without respecting their freedom and rights?**
- Am I intolerant of others' ideas or inattentive to others' needs?**
- Have I perpetuated racism, prejudices and stereotypes?**
- Do I treat people with disabilities with respect?**

Minister #1:

- Do I share my time and my treasure with others in need?**
- Have I ignored the poor in our midst?**
- Have I indulged in reading, conversation, or entertainments that are contrary to Christian decency and respect for human life?**
- Do I use the earth's resources wisely?**
- Do I purchase a lot of material goods that I don't really need?**

Minister #2:

- Am I ever afraid to act in a Christian manner, afraid of what others might think?**
- Have I accepted suffering as a share in the suffering of Christ?**
- Is the hope of eternal life my inspiration for all I do?**
- Do I sincerely want to be set free from sin, turn again to God, and resolve to begin again?**

THE RITE OF RECONCILIATION

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SIN

Deacon or Minister: Brothers and sisters (**Brethren**),
calling to mind the kindness of God our Father,
let us confess our sins, that we may obtain his mercy.

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.

LITANY

Deacon or Minister: Let us humbly pray to Christ our Savior,
whom we have as a righteous advocate with the Father,
that he will forgive us our sins
and cleanse us from all iniquity.

D or M: You were sent to bring good news to the poor
and to heal the contrite of heart.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You forgave much to the woman who loved much.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You did not refuse to sit at table with tax collectors and sinners.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You carried the lost sheep on your shoulders back to the fold.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You did not condemn the woman taken in adultery,
but told her to go in peace.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You called Zacchaeus the tax collector to conversion and new life.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You promised paradise to the repentant thief.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

D or M: You are seated at the right hand of the Father,
and live for ever to intercede for us.

All: Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. **OR** Lord, have mercy.

LORD'S PRAYER

D or M: Let us now pray together to the Father
as Christ himself commanded us,
that as we forgive one another our trespasses,
he will forgive us our sins:

All: Our Father, ...

PRAYER

Presider: O God, who have prepared helps suited to our weakness,
grant, we pray,
that we may receive their healing effects with joy
and reflect them in a holy way of life.
Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION

The presider or other minister might tell the assembly where the confessors will be located. Some brief words regarding the manner of confessions should be given. The people may be encouraged to accept one of the penances which are found in the worship aid or the confessors may give a penance suited to the individual. The assembly may be advised to remain in church if there is to be a common ending. Quiet instrumental music might be played during this time.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

Confessor: **God, the Father of mercies,
through the Death and Resurrection of his Son
has reconciled the world to himself
and poured out the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins;
through the ministry of the Church,
may God grant you pardon and peace.
AND I ABSOLVE YOU FROM YOUR SINS
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, ✠
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

Penitent: **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE FOR GOD'S MERCY

“When the individual confessions have been completed, the Priest who is presiding over the celebration, with the other Priests near him, invites all present to offer thanks and encourages them to do good works by which the grace of repentance in the life of each one and of the entire community will be shown. It is therefore appropriate for all to sing a Psalm or hymn or to say a litany to acknowledge God’s power and mercy, for example, the Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary or Psalm 136 (135):1-9, 13-14, 16, 24-26” (OP 56).

Music selections may be used or use one of the Scripture citations below.

Psalm 28: 6-7

Psalm 32: 1-7, 10-11

Psalm 54

Psalm 66

Psalm 95

Psalm 98: 1-9

Psalm 100: 1-5

Psalm 103: 1-4, 8-18

Psalm 136: 1-9, 13-14, 16, 24-26

Psalm 145: 1-21

Psalm 146:2-10

Isaiah 61: 10-11

Daniel 3:52-57

Luke 1:46-55 (Magnificat)

Ephesians 1:3-10

Revelation 15: 3-4

CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Presider:

**Almighty and merciful God,
who wonderfully created human nature,
and still more wonderfully restored it,
you do not abandon sinners,
but pursue them with a father's love;
you sent your Son into the world
to destroy sin and death by his Passion
and restore life and joy to us by the Resurrection;
you poured the Holy Spirit into our hearts
that we might be your children and heirs;
you constantly renew us by the Sacraments of salvation,
that we may be freed from slavery to sin
and be transformed more fully day by day
into the image of your beloved Son.**

**We give you thanks for the wonders of your mercy
and praise you with the whole Church,
singing to you a new song
with voice, heart, and deed.
To you be glory, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.**

All:

Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

GREETING

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

BLESSING

A Deacon may say the invitation.

Deacon: Bow down for the blessing.

Presider: May the Lord guide your hearts in the love of God
and the patience of Christ.

All: Amen.

Presider: May you walk in newness of life
and please God in all things.

All: Amen.

Presider: And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Then a Deacon, or other minister or the Priest himself, dismisses the assembly:

Deacon: The Lord has forgiven your sins. Go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.