A Penance Service for Lent

Diocese of Madison

Lent 2007

Note

The Rite of Penance is available separately or as part II of The Rites of the Catholic Church. The outline below is for a Lenten Penance Service. See appendix II of the Rite of Penance for suggestions and examples of other services, including services for children, young people, and the sick.

If you adapt this service for your parish, be sure that the major elements are retained. Every penance service should include:

- Scripture readings (one Old Testament and / or one New Testament reading, a Psalm, and Gospel)
- Examination of Conscience
- Act of contrition and general confession of sins
- Individual confessions and individual absolution
- Proclamation of praise for God’s mercy

Form III of the Rite of Penance is not permissible.

Musical Suggestions

The music provided in the leaflet is intended to assist in the celebration of Lenten Penance services. It is familiar to most Catholics. Other music may be selected that is familiar to the parish. Contact the Office of Worship if you would like assistance. Because of copyright restrictions, it is difficult for us to reprint a wide variety of music in our leaflet.

Opening Hymn

Lord, who throughout these forty days is available in most parish hymnals.

Other appropriate songs and hymns may be used, such as Where charity and love prevail, Forgive our sins, What wondrous love is this, Amazing grace, Parce Domine, Love one another, O healing river, Grant to us, O Lord, I heard the voice of Jesus say, The glory of these forty days, We have been told, and Seek the Lord. Most hymnals have a “Reconciliation” section noted in the table of contents or index.

Psalm 103

Any familiar setting may be used. This is the appointed psalm for the Third Sunday of Lent this year (cycle C), so it is available in Worship (number 799), Ritual Song (number 140, 141.II, 143), Gather Comprehensive (number 99, 100), Gather Comprehensive, 2nd edition (number 58, 59, 912). Those who use Breaking Bread/Music Issue may consult this year’s Respond and Acclaim for Sunday, March 11, 2007.
Gospel Acclamation

It is best to use the acclamation used most regularly during Lent in your parish.

Proclamation of Praise

There’s a wideness in God’s mercy is in most standard hymnals (Breaking Bread / Music Issue No. 425, Gather Comprehensive No. 626, Ritual Song No. 742, Worship No. 595, Gather Comprehensive 2nd edition No. 742). Any other hymn or psalm that speaks of God’s mercy and forgiveness is also appropriate. Contact the Office of Worship if you need assistance. Please note that verse 3 has a relation to the Gospel chosen for this year’s service. If verses are omitted, you may wish to omit verse 2 and sing verses 1 and 3.

Music During Confessions

Instrumental music is always appropriate and helpful as people are going to individual confession.

Electronic Files

If you would like an electronic copy of the Presider Book, Examination of Conscience, or the People’s Leaflet, please visit the Office of Worship web page (www.madisondiocese.org/worship).

Additional Resources

This year, additional resources, including alternate examinations of conscience and archived services from previous years will be available on our website at www.madisondiocese.org/worship. Please click on the link with resources for Lent and Easter.
Introductory Rites

Hymn *(All stand)*

Lord, who throughout these forty days.

Greeting

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

All: And also with you.

See The Rite of Penance, nos. 49 and 94-96 for alternative greetings.

Introduction

*The presider offers an introduction using these or similar words.*

Presider: Jesus said: “There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous who have no need of repentance.”

No matter how hard we try, we are a people who always stand in need of repentance, and our gathering tonight brings joy to the Lord. Let us now turn to him in prayer, humbly asking for the gift of sincere repentance.

Let us pray.

*Pause for silent prayer*

Opening Prayer *(Rite of Penance, 99)*

Presider:

Lord, hear the prayers of those who call upon you, forgive the sins of those who confess to you, and in your merciful love give us your pardon and your peace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*For other forms of the Opening Prayer, see The Rite of Penance, nos. 50, and 97-100.*
Celebration of the Word of God

See Rite of Penance, nos. 101-201 for other texts.

**Reading (All sit)**
Ephesians 2:4-10 (Lectionary for Mass, number 32—Fourth Sunday of Lent, cycle B)
_Though dead in your transgressions, by grace you have been saved._

**Psalm**
Psalm 103 (Lectionary for Mass, number 30—Third Sunday of Lent, cycle C)
_The Lord is kind and merciful._

**Gospel Acclamation (All stand)**

**Gospel**
Luke 15:3-7 (Lectionary for Mass, number 172—Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Cycle C)
_Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep._

**Homily (All sit)**

**Examination of Conscience**

_See the attached handout or The Rite of Penance, appendix III._
Rite of Reconciliation

General Confession of Sins (*All stand*)

(*For additional texts, see The Rite of Penance nos. 54 and 202-205.*)

**Presider:** My 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.

[Let us kneel.] *All kneel.*

**All:** I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; and 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.

[Please stand] *All stand for the litany.*

**Presider:** Let us pray with confidence to Christ, the Good Shepherd, who seeks out the lost sheep and carries it back with joy.

**All:** Seek us out and bring us home.

*The litany may be led by the priest, deacon, cantor, or lector.*

Your mercy is our hope: welcome us to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**All:** Seek us out and bring us home.

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

**All:** Seek us out and bring us home.

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

**All:** Seek us out and bring us home.

Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation may we grow in your peace
and seek to spread it throughout the world.  

_All:_ *Seek us out and bring us home.*

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.

_All:_ *Seek us out and bring us home.*

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

_All:_ *Seek us out and bring us home.*

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

_All:_ *Seek us out and bring us home.*

Presider: Let us ask our Father to forgive our sins and to bring us to forgive those who sin against us.

All: Our Father . . .

Presider: Lord, draw near to your servants who in the presence of your Church confess that they are sinners. Through the ministry of the Church free them from all sin so that renewed in spirit they may give you thankful praise. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.
Individual Confession and Absolution

The presider or another minister announces the stations for confession. Please encourage those assembled to remain until the end of the penance service in these or similar words: “Please remain with the community of penitents after going to confession. Pray for your brothers and sisters who are present, and those who could not be with us. After we have all confessed and received absolution for our sins, we will celebrate the forgiveness of our merciful God.”

Individual priests assign a penance to the penitent.

When individual confessions have concluded:

Proclamation of Praise for God’s Mercy (All stand)

Presider: Brothers and sisters,
The Lord is loving and kind: his mercy is for ever.
[Let us praise God in song.]

If a psalm, canticle, or song is not sung, a psalm may be recited. See The Rite of Penance no. 206 for additional texts.

Concluding Prayer of Thanksgiving

(For additional texts, see The Rite of Penance nos. 57 and 207-211.)

Presider: Father,
in your love you have brought us from evil to good and from misery to happiness.
Through your blessings give the courage of perseverance to those you have called and justified by faith.
Grant this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.
Concluding Rite

Blessing & Dismissal

Presider:  May the Father bless us, for we are his children, born to eternal life.
All:  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, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
All:  Amen.

Presider:  The Lord has freed you from your sins.
Go in peace.
All:  Thanks be to God.

_A closing hymn is not necessary, but may be sung._

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