



**ADVENT PENITENTIAL  
SERVICE WITH CONFESSION  
2023**

*(Suggested Format)*

# ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE 2023

## OPENING HYMN

Wait for the Lord

*Taize*

Wait for the Lord, his day is near  
Wait for the Lord, be strong take heart  
Prepare the way for the Lord  
Make a straight path for Him  
The Glory of the Lord shall be revealed  
All the Earth will see the Lord  
Rejoice in the Lord always  
He is at Hand  
Joy and gladness for all who seek the Lord

## GREETING

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

**And with your spirit.**

## INTRODUCTION

**Presider:**

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 fulfilment. 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]. Our penitential service helps prepare us in mind and heart for the coming of Christ, which we are soon to celebrate in the Mass of Christmas.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

### **Presider:**

Almighty and merciful God,  
you have brought us together in the name of your Son  
to receive your mercy and grace in our time of need.  
Touch our hearts and convert us to yourself.  
Where sin has divided and scattered,  
may your love make one again;  
where sin has brought weakness,  
may your power heal and strengthen;  
where sin 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.**

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

*One or more readings may be chosen. If more than one is read, a psalm should be inserted between them. If there is only one reading, it is preferable that it be from the gospel.*

*Readings can be taken from the Lectionary, either for the Season of Advent (Volume I) or the Rite of Penance (Volume 3 (also found in Rite of Penance)). The readings of the day might be considered.*

**Reading 1** Isaiah 40: 1–5. 9–11

Prepare a way for the Lord

Lectionary Volume 1

**Responsorial Psalm** (Psalm 24)

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Lectionary Volume 1: p. 950

**Reading 2** 1 Thessalonians 3:12–4: 2

May the Lord confirm your hearts in holiness when Christ comes

Lectionary Volume 1

**Reading 3** Gospel Luke 3: 10–18

What must we do?

Lectionary: Volume 1

**HOMILY**

*The homily is based on the texts of the readings and should lead the penitents to examine their conscience and renew their lives.*

**EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**

*An Examination of Conscience is not always necessary. It may be more appropriate to follow the homily with a period of silence.*

**Litany of Reconciliation**

**Presider:**

Jesus Christ in his mercy pardons our offences against God and reconciles us with the Church we have wounded by our sins, Let us pray to him, the victor over sins and death. **℟ Lord Jesus, be our salvation.**

**℟ Lord Jesus, be our salvation**

You came from God as our wisdom and justice, our sanctification and redemption. **℟**

Though you were rich you became poor for our sake, so that by your poverty we might become rich. *℟*

You came into the world to save sinners. *℟*

You gave yourself up to bring redemption to all. *℟*

You destroyed death and gave light to life. *℟*

You will come to judge the living and the dead. *℟*

You became the source of salvation for all who obey you. *℟*

You came into the world to seek and save what was lost. *℟*

You were sent by the Father, not to judge the world but to save it. *℟*

You invite all who labour and are burdened to come to you to be refreshed. *℟*

You told us that the whole law depends on love of God and of our neighbour. *℟*

Jesus, source of all life, you came into the world to bring us to the fullness of life. *℟*

Jesus, eternal truth, you give us true freedom. *℟*

Jesus, you are the way to the Father. *℟*

Jesus, you are the resurrection and the life for those who believe in you. *℟*

## OR

*(The following examination draws on an examen offered by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and is adapted for this Advent Penitential Service)*

### **Presider:**

My brothers and sisters, before we approach to receive God's mercy and forgiveness let us reflect on our lives and acknowledge those areas of our lives that are burdened and weighed down by the times that we have not lived and loved as we know God wants us to.

**Reader 1:**

**I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange God's before me.**

Are there people, possessions and events that I believe are more important than you, my God? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 2:**

**You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**

Do I use my words to put down God, the Church or people? Do I fail to speak up for what I believe in when I hear God, the Church or those who work for God in the world criticised unfairly? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 3:**

**Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.**

Do I do my very best go to Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service of others on Sunday? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 4:**

**Honour your father and mother.**

Do I show my parents due respect? Do I try to maintain good communication with my parents where possible? Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 5:**

**You shall not kill.**

Have I participated in the killing of another person's joy, talent or good name through my words, actions, on social media or by bullying? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 6:**

**You shall not steal.**

Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another? Have I added to the environmental damage of the earth at the cost to future generations? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 7:**

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.**

Have I gossiped, told lies or embellished stories at the expense of another? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

**Reader 8:**

**You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.**

Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily? (Pause)

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world. **All: Grant us peace.**

**Presider:** Now, in obedience to Christ himself, let us unite in prayer to the Father, asking him to forgive us as we forgive others.

**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.  
**Amen**

## **INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

*Penitents are invited to avail of individual confession. The priest will prescribe a penance. Penitents are encouraged to spend time in private prayer while individual confessions take place.*

*Music during the time of Individual Confession should not be thought of as just 'filling' to help the time pass more pleasantly. It needs to be carefully prepared. In essence music accompanies people on a journey towards mercy, healing and renewal.*

*There is value in Instrumental music in that it does not have words, and allows more space for a congregation to continue with its own thoughts and prayerful conversation with the Lord.*

## **CONCLUDING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**Presider:**

Lord God,  
creator and ruler of your kingdom of light,  
in your great love for this world  
you gave up your only Son  
for our salvation.  
His cross has redeemed us,  
his death has given us life,  
his resurrection has raise us to glory.  
Through him we ask you  
to be always present among your family.  
Teach us to be reverent in the presence of your glory;  
fill our hearts with faith,



our days with good works,  
our lives with your love;  
may your truth be on our lips  
and your wisdom in all our actions,  
that we may receive the reward of everlasting life.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**

## **CONCLUDING RITE**

### **Presider:**

May the Father, 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 the gift of holiness  
and lead us by the right path,  
for he dwells in our hearts.

**℟ Amen**

### **Dismissal**

### **Presider:**

The Lord has freed you from your sins.  
Go in peace

**All**

**Thanks be to God**