

gospel, as if under a basket, or reveal the light of the gospel to all who see Jesus shining in our hearts.

Reader 2: Call to mind a few occasions where your actions did not reflect the light of the gospel. Listen to the Holy Spirit speaking within you and reflect on the feeling these memories stir up in you. On other occasions when you shared the gospel light, how did you feel?

(Pause for reflection.)

P In the light of God's redeeming grace, we pray: The wisdom of the Holy Spirit speaks within us, dear Jesus, to light our way. Give us ears to hear and hearts filled with courage to run into your arms. When we walk with you, the gospel shines for all to see.

A **Forgive us, O God, and restore us to new life.**

GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

(All stand.)

P God of all creation, into the darkness you breathed light into the world. We desire nothing more than to be in union with our Savior, Jesus Christ, your Son. With one voice we pray:

A **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.**

(Remain standing.)

LITANY OF REPENTANCE

P We trust in God's mercy, and in Jesus' name we ask that God restore us to new life through the forgiveness of our sins.

C In humility, we recognize our failures to forgive one another and seek reconciliation.

A **Lord, have mercy.**

C In our impatience, we have failed to listen for your voice speaking in our hearts as we pray.

A **Christ, have mercy.**

C In fear of criticism, we have failed to spread the light of the gospel by speaking out for the oppressed and the poor.

A **Lord, have mercy.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P We pray as Jesus taught us:

A **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

(All sit. Instructions for individual confession are given here. When individual confessions are complete, the assembly gathers once again.)

CONCLUDING PRAYER

(All stand.)

P Send the light of your Spirit, O God, into our hearts. Forgiven and set free from the shadow of our sinfulness, we will walk in the light of your love during this Advent season.

A **Amen.**

P We give you thanks, Almighty God, for your everlasting love and grace. Continue to bless our efforts to love as Jesus taught us, as in his name we offer one another a sign of peace.

(All may exchange a Sign of Peace.)

FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

P May the blessing of Almighty God be yours, in the name of the Father, and the Son ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

A **Amen.**

P Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

A **Thanks be to God.**

CLOSING HYMN

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An
**Advent Penance
Service**

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OPENING HYMN

(All stand.)

Presider: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Presider: May the grace of our loving God and the peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

P This Advent season, as we await the dawning of the Lord's birth, let us open our hearts to the light of God's forgiveness and love.

(Pause for reflection.)

P Let us pray: God of all grace, the darkness of sin has covered our eyes, and you alone can heal our sight. Have mercy on us, O God. We desire to see the path to your son, Jesus, and walk in his light once again.

A Amen.

(All sit.)

First Reading..... Isaiah 60:1-9

Responsorial Psalm..... Psalm 103:8, 10, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18

C The Lord is kind and merciful.

A The Lord is kind and merciful.

C Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.
Not according to our sins does he deal with us,
nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

A The Lord is kind and merciful.

C As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear
him.

For he knows how we are formed;
he remembers that we are dust.

A The Lord is kind and merciful.

C Man's days are like those of grass;
like a flower of the field he blooms;
The wind sweeps over him and he is gone,
and his place knows him no more.

A The Lord is kind and merciful.

C But the kindness of the LORD is from eternity
to eternity toward those who fear him,
And his justice toward children's children
among those who keep his covenant
and remember to fulfill his precepts.

A The Lord is kind and merciful.

Second ReadingPhilippians 2:12-16

(All stand.)

Gospel ReadingJohn 8:12-20

(All sit.)

HOMILY

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

(All kneel.)

Reader 1: *Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove that splinter from your eye,' while the wooden beam is in your eye? You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye. (Matthew 7:3-5)*

The measure of judgment belongs to God alone. God created us human and ordinary. Advent gives us time to reflect on the ordinary human birth of Jesus and his willingness to embrace human suffering and joy.

Reader 2: Do I believe that my being ordinary serves God's will? Am I willing to remove the splinter from

my eye that prevents me from loving the gift of ordinary human flaws in others?

(Pause for reflection.)

P In the light of God's redeeming grace, we pray: Help us to see with open hearts when our eyes have been covered by the darkness of selfishness and pride.

A Forgive us, O God, and restore us to new life.

Reader 1: *Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. [But] even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:21-26)*

We believe, as Martha did, in the power of Jesus to free us from the tomb of darkness and sin. Jesus asks us to share his love with others that all may believe in Jesus, the Light of the World.

Reader 2: For what am I afraid to ask of Jesus? What creates darkness and fear in my life that keeps me from serving others? Where is Jesus inviting me to go with him so that others may see my faith in his love?

(Pause for reflection.)

P In the light of God's redeeming grace, we pray: Jesus, you have called us by name from the darkness of our own willfulness and sin. Lead us with the light of your love that we may see your face in those we are called to serve.

A Forgive us, O God, and restore us to new life.

Reader 1: *[Jesus] said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand? For there is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light. Anyone who has ears to hear ought to hear." (Mark 4:21-23)*

The words of Jesus have been given to the world through the gospels that all may hear and believe. Our actions each day can either hide the light of the